

Out of the Maze: Directing Fear to Create Quality Child Care

An Exploratory Study to Develop Communications Strategies and a Messaging Framework

Elizabeth Cooper

Capstone Project

June 19, 2013



Table of Contents

About the Author	3
Introduction	3
Literature Review	5
Section 1: Fear - the Conversation Starter	5
Section 2: Context - the Conversation Already Underway	8
Section 3: Relevance - the Conversation Must Matter	11
Section 4: Empowerment - From Conversation to Action	13
Research Questions and Hypotheses	19
Research Methods and Data Collection	19
Findings	
Section 1: Results , Research Questions and Related Data	23
Section 2: Discussion – Hypothesis and Data Results	26
Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research	33
Recommendations and Conclusion	34
References	36
Appendices	38
Appendix 1, <i>Star Tribune</i> Articles	38
Appendix 2, Exploratory Quasi-Experiment Recruitment Scripts	45
Appendix 3, Child Care Consult Script	47
Appendix 4, Survey 1	49
Appendix 5, Survey 1A	50
Appendix 6, Answer Key, Exploratory Quasi-Experiment Survey	50
Appendix 7, Exploratory Quasi-Experiment Data	51
Appendix 8, In-Depth Parent Interview Transcripts	101

About the Author

Elizabeth Cooper has devoted her professional life to non-profit communications with a specific focus on education and child care. She became passionate about improving child care when her infant son was injured in a child care program that was soon after found to be severely out-of-compliance with safety rules. After joining the educational non-profit Child Care Aware eight years ago, she found conventional approaches to consumer education to be insufficient to guide the charged emotional, economic and cultural conversations surrounding child care. Ms. Cooper joined the Master of Arts in Strategic Communications program at the University of Minnesota to better address the complexity of her work. The Capstone presented here is a culmination of these efforts.

Introduction

Parents are panicked and conflicted about child care but most take no action (Child Care Aware, 2012). Many feel guilty about leaving their children in child care but note it to be an economic necessity (Chase, 2010). While acceptance of mothers in the workplace has become the norm, negative judgments about the choice to leave one's child in the care of others is common (Chase, 2010). Further complicating—or illuminating—these emotional decisions, parents have recently been exposed to [frightening media coverage](#) regarding the safety of child care (Appendix 1). In response to the *Star Tribune* (2012) series highlighting sexual abuse, SIDS deaths and neglect in child care, one mother posted the following on the newspaper's comment page: "I never expected child care to be the toughest issue my family faces. We can't find anything better but I know my kids are not getting enough love, and now I learn they may actually be in danger. I feel physically sick when I drop them off each day."

Advocates suggest that parents are right to be concerned, citing the mediocre quality of child care overall and the lack of education among care providers, who are required to receive less pre-service training than nail technicians and dog groomers (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2012). The

immediate well-being of children is not all that is at stake: The health of our current and future workforce is also on the line. When parents are concerned about their children's well-being they are more likely to miss work and while at work their productivity suffers (Wohl, 2003). Moreover, our next generation of workers is disadvantaged by the system.

Nearly 50 percent of Minnesota's children arrive at kindergarten unprepared and many of these children never catch up (Minnesota Department of Education, 2010). Quality early learning experiences have been shown to offer the best preparation for school, professional success and civic contributions (Schweinhart, 2005).

Some parents have responded to the discussion by moving their children from program to program (Child Care Aware, 2011). Many more—fully one third of Minnesota parents in fact—report that they feel they need to “accept whatever care they can get” and take no action (Chase, 2010). The elements of this decision to act, or to choose inaction, appear to be complex, braiding the intensity of parental love, the economic realities of recession-era family budgeting and the slow, steady recasting of a cultural frame of babysitting to one of early education.

Researcher Richard Chase noted the complexity at play: “Parents are driven to protect their children above all else. But does this mean going to work in order to provide for them—when they know they’re using subpar care—or pulling them from child care, protecting them in the moment while placing their overall well-being in question by risking unemployment. This calculus, weighing potential tragedy against financial failure takes place every day, countless times in every Minnesota community” (Chase, 2011, Minnesota Public Radio). In an article entitled, “The Hell of American Day Care” *The New Republic* described child care quality in the United States as “Wildly uneven and barely monitored, and at the lower end...Dickensian” (Cohn, April, 2013. p 3).

This is the context within which Child Care Aware works to engage parents in meaningful conversations about choosing and using child care and which will provide the focus of this paper. Leading communication researchers—highlighted in the following literature review— suggest that fear can be used to power a new child care conversation. Original in-depth parent interviews, a pre and post-service exploratory experiment and Child Care Aware service data will offer insights into the conversation already underway and the best approaches to guiding it to create change.

Literature Review

Section 1: Fear - the Conversation Starter

Central Processing of Fear and the Perceived Weight of Loss

Researchers across disciplines stand on the shoulders of the seminal social psychology theory of persuasion, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The model demonstrates two paths to learning, or persuasion: central and peripheral. The central route employs critical thinking. The peripheral route involves a lower level of cognitive involvement driven by simple cues and unexamined stimuli. The ideas imparted when one processes centrally are more accessible to the thinker for a longer period of time, tend to create more strongly held beliefs and are more likely to lead to behavior change (Rucker & Petty, 2006). Simply put, central processing is achieved when a persuasion piece manages to engage the audience member in such a way that he or she is interacting with, almost conversing with the messages.

According to Petty and Cacioppo, when individuals lack the ability or interest to process a message centrally, they must rely on cues gleaned from a surface-level interpretation of the communication and will often rely on past experiences or existing scripts to interpret what is presented.

Much of the literature suggests that fear leads to heightened attention and central processing (Ito, Larsen, Smith & Cacioppo, 1998; Witte & Allen, 2000). For example, a mother who called the Child Care Aware office for guidance following the *Star Tribune* coverage of infants dying in unsafe child care said she couldn't sleep and that she kept "Going over it again and again. Those poor children. How do I prevent this from happening to my baby?" She responded with great attention to this story above others. It seems likely that she was processing the information centrally; it had her full attention, she was elaborating on the information and had fully engaged with the idea that there was a problem and she was ready to act.

This woman demonstrates the ways in which negative information grabs and holds our attention for a myriad of evolutionary and social reasons. Taylor (1991) shows that events and stimuli perceived to be negative kick our systems—physical, emotional and cognitive—into high gear to allow for a speedy response to protect our families, our physical well-being or our reputation. In fact, Petty et al. (1988) documented increased brain activity when subjects processed information perceived to be negative as compared with information described as positive or neutral.

This tendency to afford negative information more attention than positive or neutral stimuli is commonly dubbed "the negativity bias." Communication efforts that tap into this bias in order to elicit a high level of arousal and threat-focused emotion, as well as offer a solution are termed fear appeals. (Witte, 1992) The ultimate goal of all appeals, Witte and other researchers suggest, is not simply to elicit fear but to change behavior and thinking. This is commonly termed, "message acceptance" (Witte, 2012).

The negativity bias is often demonstrated using Prospect Theory, which famously proved that "losses loom larger than gains" (Tversky & Kahneman, 1992; Schmidt & Zank, 2012). Prospect Theory offers a

framework for understanding attention paid to negative messages and the likelihood of action to follow. The theory does not make absolute predictions about behavior (e.g. negative messages lead to action or paralysis). It instead highlights the relevant motivations and tendencies that will apply to negative and positive frames in specific contexts.

Most relevant is the theory's central tenet that we are more willing to consider risks when presented with negative possibilities than potential gains. Demonstrated by introducing the "Asian disease problem" to subjects, the researchers showed that the prospect of *saving* 200 (of 600 total) lives is preferable to a less-certain possibility of increasing the lives saved. The negative mirror of this proposal, the prospect of *forfeiting* 400 of 600 lives, elicits a movement toward risk-taking in order to change the outcome. The negative and positive approaches to introducing options are termed, "gain and loss frames" by Tverskey and Kahneman (1992, p. 316).

Prospect Theory suggests that extremely negative information about child care will highlight potential losses to parents: lost peace-of-mind, lack of safety for their children, even loss of life. The mother who called Child Care Aware, losing sleep over the news coverage, was considering these losses with great attention and focus. A frame representing this conversation would be: "You lose peace of mind and your child's safety when your child is in subpar care" and its corollary gain frame would be, "You gain peace of mind if you choose good child care."

Loss and gain frames are understood differently or, to put it another way, best differentiated by subjects when they process centrally (Rogers, 1975; Leventhal, 1971; Witte, 2012). This finding further weaves Prospect Theory and Elaboration Likelihood.

Prospect Theory therefore suggests that the *Star Tribune* stories could of carefully assessing the current

care situation and, if necessary, making an informed move to a new care facility. The theory suggests that parents will be primed to learn about quality child care in these circumstances and as a part of this process.

Section 2: Context - the Conversation Already Underway

Health Appeal Research Demonstrates the Power of Perception

Health appeal researchers have found a rich foundation for new research in Prospect Theory. This corps of thinkers, led by Rothman and Salovey, have proposed a deepened framework for analyzing audience response to health appeals and for designing responsive campaigns (Rothman & Salovey, 1997).

Before moving on, the connections between health and child care safety appeals must be drawn. There are strong similarities in the decision-making involved in that basic well-being is at stake and high emotions are at play. In the same way that many of us fail to pursue healthy behaviors, parents fail to screen their child care choices (Child Care Aware, 2012). Moreover, learning one's child has been spending most of their waking hours in a dangerous setting is likely to carry a high degree of perceived short and long-term risk that is on par with those of a significant health diagnosis. Because of these parallels, the current health research may offer deeper insights into child care messaging.

Health persuasion researchers like Dr. Alex Rothman have looked beyond dichotomous discussions of the relative merits of positive and negative messaging to discover that the ultimate goal of behavior change is achieved through messaging that syncs up with the conversation already underway. In other words, Rothman suggests that the prevailing narrative on an issue must be considered. "Behaviors can be said to engender a 'personality' in that they evoke a pattern of thoughts and feelings that are consistently present whenever a person contemplates or engages in the behavior" (Rothman et al., 2008

p. 479).

For example, in communication with an audience which views eating healthily in a positive light, messages matching this tone will be most effective. Should middle-aged women feel petrified at the suggestion of a mammogram, effective messaging that meets them here, in this negative space, will yield results.

This construct led Rothman to a differentiation between messages promoting health-affirming and illness-detecting behaviors (Rothman et al., 1997, 2008). If one understands a recommended behavior to carry risks or costs—consistent with a “detection” behavior and the mammogram example above—a risk-focused fear appeal is shown to be most effective. Alternately, if one understands a recommended behavior to carry primarily benefits—consistent with a health-affirming function and increasing fruit and vegetable intake—messages that continue this tone, employing a gain frame, will see benefits.

With this body of work, Rothman and his colleagues suggest that negative child care coverage may build a negative, loss-focused frame in which messages encouraging a child care “screening,” or a careful evaluation of one’s child care choice, could be successfully injected. This detection framework—as opposed to an affirming framework—is proposed as most appropriate to this study for two reasons.

First, the negative media attention, chosen to represent an important component of the current conversation within the culture, has been hypothesized to dictate a negative frame within which child care communicators must work. In other words, the risks and costs of this behavior are expected to become salient because of the negative nature of the media coverage.

Next, with the negative risks established by the media coverage, the advocated behavior is likely to be construed as a monitoring behavior enacted primarily to bring problems to light and not a preventative

or affirming behavior, understood to have little potential for costs (Rothman et al., 2008). This is because screening one's child care is fraught with potential complications. The short-term complications—searching for new care, missing work, supporting a child in a large-scale transition—are especially relevant as Rothman demonstrates that riskiness is often perceived and measured in the realm of the short term (Rothman et al., 2008).

This sense of risk may be intensified by the emotional gravity of parenting mistakes: It is reasonable to feel a sense of risk when delving into an assessment of the caregiver with whom, and setting in which, their children spend most of their waking hours. The level of emotional complexity and perception of risk found here may be on par with that of a patient who has not always taken care of himself contemplating a stress test or cholesterol check. It is expected, therefore, that the predominantly negative coverage of child care has contributed to a risk-focused cultural narrative and that parents will respond to loss-framed negative messaging as highlighted in Rothman's messaging grid below (Rothman & Salovey, 1997).

ACTION \ OUTCOME	Desirable	Undesirable
Attain	If you ensure your child care is high-quality, your child is more likely to be safe and ready for kindergarten. Positive Messaging, Gain Frame	If you ensure your child care is high-quality, your child is less at risk for neglect and falling behind in their learning. Positive Messaging, Loss Frame
Not Attain	If you fail to ensure your child care is of high quality, you will lose assurances about your child's safety and school readiness. Negative Messaging, Gain Frame	If you do not ensure your child care is of high quality, your child is more likely to be neglected and unprepared for school. Negative Messaging, Loss Frame

Rothman's research (Gallagher et al., 2011; Rothman et al., 1997, 2008) suggests that these projections will only prove true, however, if parents notice the coverage and interpret it as relevant. In order to confirm that detection framing and the corollary fear appeals are most appropriate, it must be demonstrated that parents perceive child care as important, perceive child care choices as risk-laden and that they process the negative media coverage and/or other negative messaging about child care as relevant and threatening.

Section 3: Relevance - the Conversation Must Matter

Individual Differences and Perceived Susceptibility Trump Some, But Not All, Message Effect

Reinforcing Hamlet's musing that "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so," the macro-focused strategies discussed thus far are complicated by nuanced individual differences in experience and temperament.

Rothman et al. (1997, 2008) note that individual disposition or personality may override the prevailing gain or loss-based assessments that drive message processing. An individual who is highly cautious and timid may view every appeal in terms of risk or fear while a perpetually upbeat individual may view every challenge as an opportunity. This suggests that while the majority of people may view a mammogram or child care screening as a risky step in the realm of detection, some may reject this paradigm as it runs counter to their general disposition. Lerner & Keltner (2001) found that fearful individuals make pessimistic, risk-averse choices while happy individuals made choices and risk-seeking judgments. These findings collectively suggest that negative child care coverage and subsequently created loss-framed messages may be most salient to parents with a predisposition to worry.

Gallagher, Updegraff, Rothman and Sims (2011) found that personal interest or connection to an issue

leads to greater effectiveness of gain and loss-based framing. They shined a light on the need to confirm a sense of susceptibility to the problem at hand by demonstrating that women who perceive themselves to be at risk for breast cancer are significantly more responsive to loss-framed fear appeals designed to inspire mammography.

Witte et al. (2011) reinforce this assertion by declaring personal susceptibility to be a precursor to processing a fear appeal. These findings underscore the need to study carefully the dominant understanding of parents' perceived role in monitoring child care and their understanding of the threat in proximity to their own family.

How are researchers and communicators to make use of this information in large-scale campaigns that do not allow tailored messaging across personalities and individual experiences? In a recent interview (personal interaction, April 1, 2013) Dr. Alex Rothman suggested that only *absent* a dominant cultural narrative or current topical discussion on an issue would personal disposition prevail. Based on this insight, communicators may therefore assume that the conversation underway in the culture is the first and best source of communication insights and the most strategic messaging foundation.

Yan, Dillard & Shen (2012) place the burden back on the communicator by suggesting the message should create shared understanding with an audience. They confirm that loss-and-gain framed messages are appropriate depending on the contexts, and further assert that for best persuasion the messages should inhabit and *create* a specific audience mood state. This suggests that the understanding and individuality the audience brings to the conversation matter, but that the message itself can build understanding, relevancy and susceptibility.

Section 4: **Empowerment - From Conversation to Action**

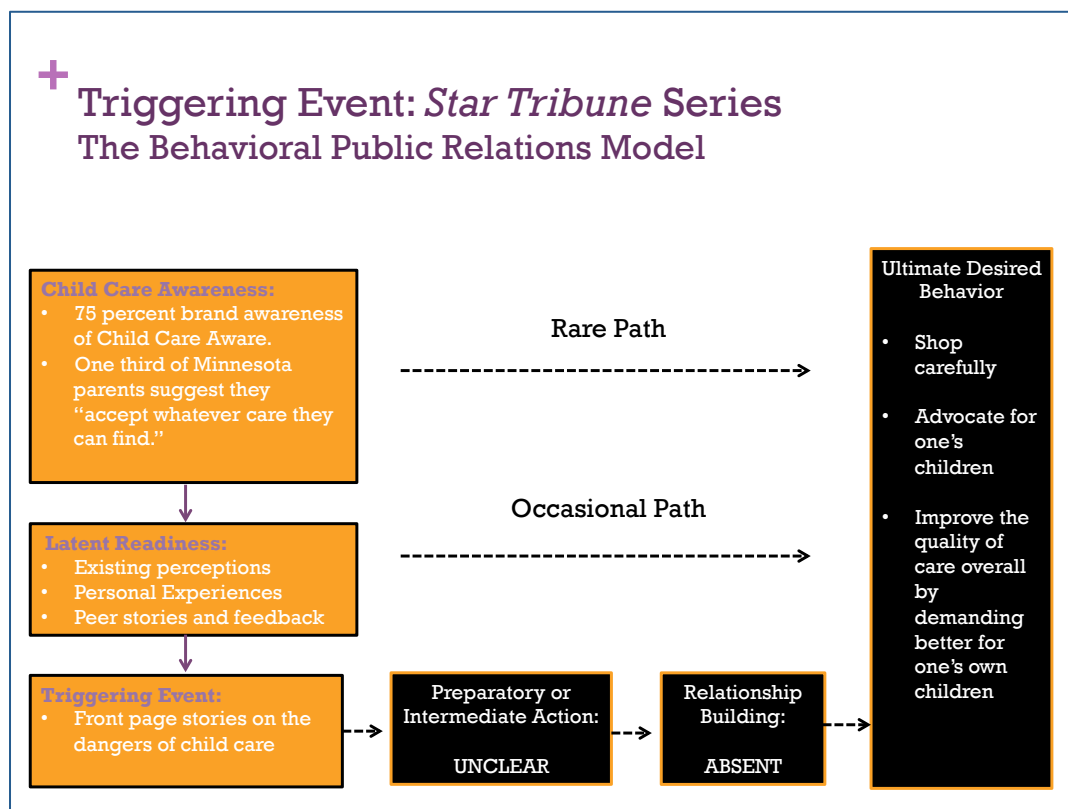
Jackson's (2009) Behavioral Public Relations Model shines a light on the chasm between basic awareness and behavior change. Within the model, media coverage is thought to generate awareness and contribute to the mental "file" in which individuals store child care information. Adding new information to this cache of impressions and knowledge contributes to "latent readiness," or a more fleshed out understanding that primes one for action. Individuals often build on and direct their understanding by asking trusted contacts about their position on the issue, brand or action in question. The subjects' core values—or most deeply held beliefs and behavioral tendencies—will partly dictate their decision to act or remain inactive.

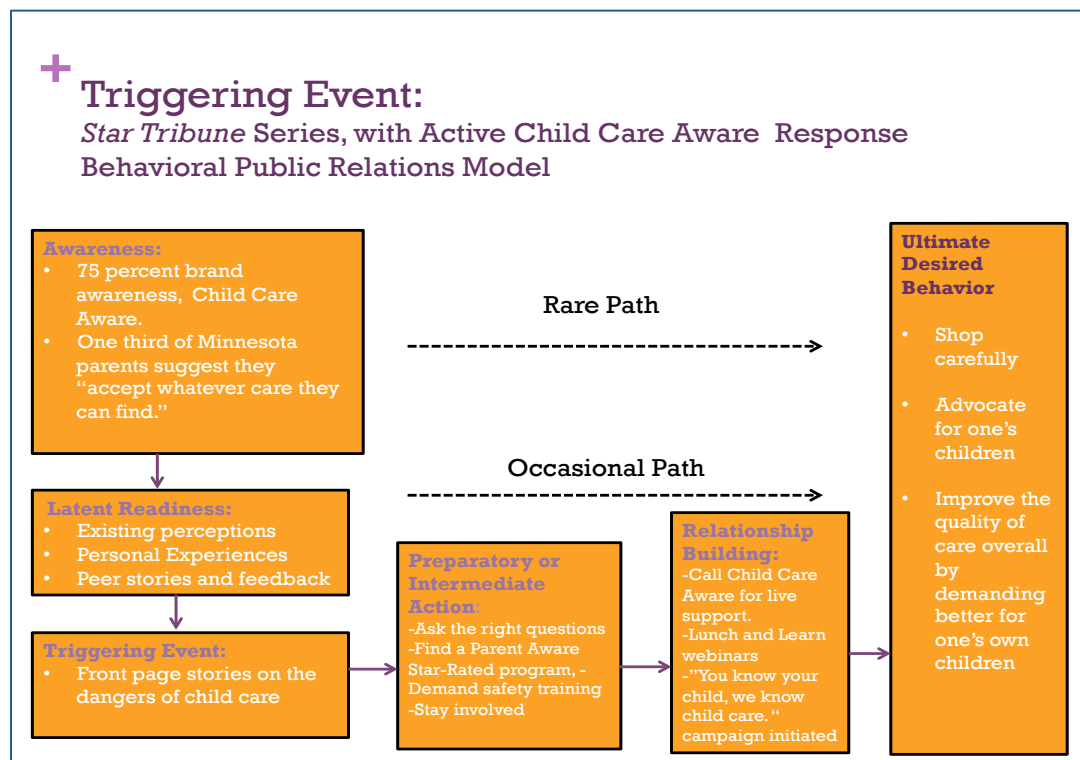
Jackson suggests that "triggering events" move subjects from latent readiness to behavior change. These circumstances bring focus to an issue and motivate action by removing barriers such as procrastination. Triggering events may be constructed, as with a sale on "age defying" wrinkle cream displayed next to a youth-worshipping fashion magazine. They may be milestones or moments of note that are usurped, as seen in the promotion of well-child checkups scheduled around kids' birthdays. They may occur in the environment and be capitalized upon. For example, gun control groups noted an environmental triggering event when they mobilized in response to the Newtown shootings in December of 2012 (Barron, *New York Times*. 2012.) Finally, triggering events may be fended off in circumstances in which they are in competition with the agenda of an organization.

In order to capitalize on Jackson's model, organizations must consider intermediate behaviors, or those steps that move individuals closer, sequentially, to the desired behavior. It is unrealistic, for example, to assume that a life-long tobacco user will quit entirely after viewing one compelling ad. Instead many tobacco cessation campaigns focus on beginning the sequential process of quitting with one simple step

(McAlister et al. 2004). Intermediate behaviors, when considered alongside the related triggering events, will allow organizations to anticipate and guide the conversations that will generate behavior change. Relationship-building efforts are the final phase that must be considered, Jackson asserts, when moving publics toward behavior change. For example, tobacco cessation counselors might be made available to smokers targeted in the campaign referenced above. They may text these individuals regularly and set up monthly face-to-face check-ins to encourage them on toward behavior change.

Within this framework, an important triggering event related to child care behavior occurred in the *Star Tribune* series and it should be capitalized upon. The series alone, however, is unlikely to move parents past latent readiness. As illustrated in the charts below, parents will need to understand the steps they may take to correct the situation and that expert, personally delivered help is available to move to the advocated behavior of child care screening.





Witte's Extended Parallel Processing Model (2011) demonstrates the important interaction between the subject's perception of threat, efficacy (or a sense of empowerment) and the resulting behavior choice.

Originally introduced by Leventhal (1971) and Rogers (1975) the fear control process and Protection Motivation Theory suggest that subjects will control feelings of fear through denial or avoidance rather than dealing with the problem at hand. Witte builds on these concepts by asserting that demonstrating a clear and credible path out of danger can mitigate the fear control process.

When exposed to fear appeals, Witte demonstrates, subjects may respond in one of three ways: non-response, danger control response or fear control response (2011). Should individuals determine that the threat is real and severe for them, they will move into danger or fear control. Only those who

perceive their efficacy to be sufficient to cope will move to danger control, the optimal position from a communicator's perspective, as this state involves use of recommended strategies and message acceptance.

Efficacy, defined by Witte as "The effectiveness, feasibility, and ease with which a recommended response impedes or averts a threat" (Witte 1996, p. 320), is multi-faceted. Within this framework, efficacy breaks down into two types: perceived self-efficacy—one's sense that they are able to complete the recommended act—and perceived response efficacy—one's sense that the recommended course of action will effectively avert the threat. For example, a parent whose own children are in college may view the *Star Tribune* series as a low threat. They will not engage the messages further and would be classified as non-responsive. Alternately, if a parent notes the relevance (they have an infant in child care) and the severity (the stories involve infant deaths) they are likely to assess their efficacy to change the situation.

Since the news story failed to recommend any course of action for parents (parents may intuit that they could call policymakers for a long-term fix) they are likely to gauge their sense of efficacy as low. While parents could read the articles and learn that policymakers have the power to change the situation, it is not reasonable to assume the act of contacting one's legislator would have any effect on the immediate dangers of child care. In these circumstances, Witte suggests, parents will move into the fear control process and deny the stories' relevance, reassure themselves it could never apply to their children or, alternatively, panic outright.

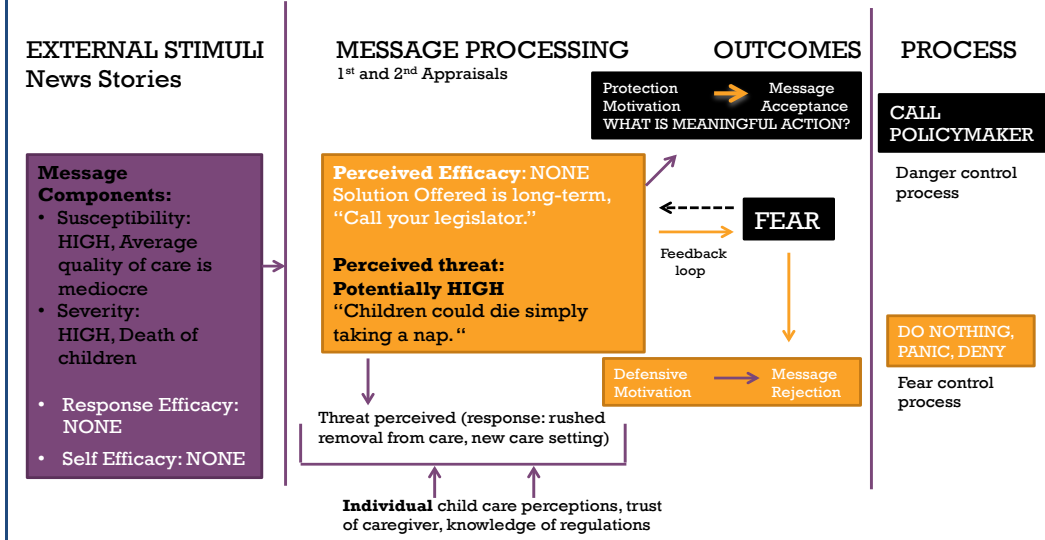
These findings suggest that efforts to inject persuasive messages toward child care screenings into this conversation are unlikely to succeed unless the tone and content of the messages highlight a clear solution. Therefore, in order to take advantage of the moment of focus created by the *Star Tribune*

series and future negative coverage, Child Care Aware must work to add self-efficacy and response efficacy to parent messages.

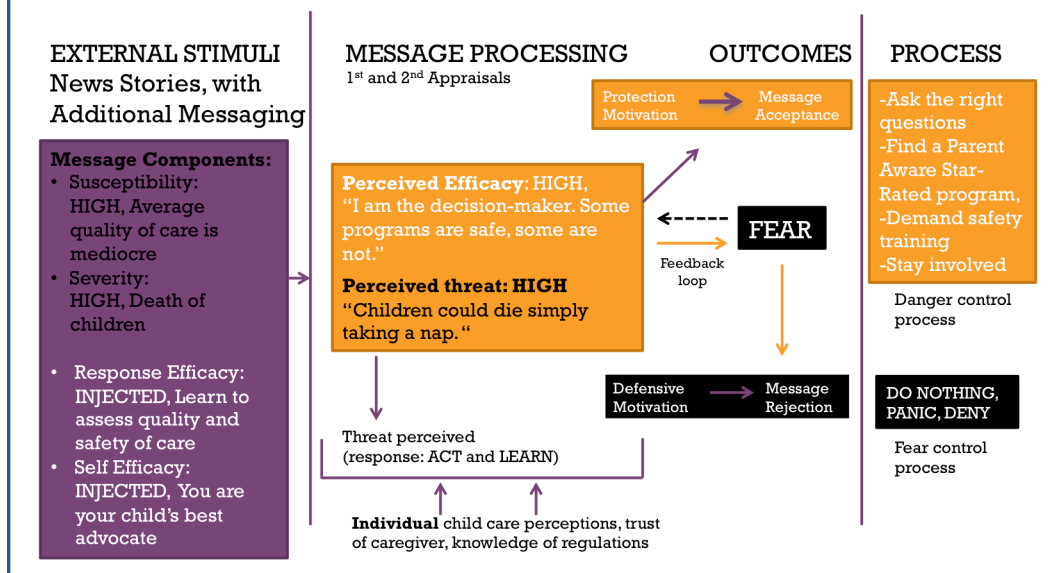
Response efficacy, or a sense that the recommended solution is relevant and viable, is represented in the Child Care Aware parent services script. Parents receive detailed information on the safety benefits of choosing child care carefully and the safety costs of hastily made decisions. These messages appear as general talking points along the lines of, “This is one of the most important decisions you will make as a parent. Quality child care lasts a lifetime” and are supported through actionable information shared on areas like safe adult to child ratios, monitoring for safe sleep, etc.

Efforts to build response efficacy into advertising and other more general messaging—outside of the Child Care Aware parent education process itself—will be considered by the organization. These discussions are outside the scope of this paper, however, which is specifically focused on the ability of parent educators—employed by Child Care Aware to help parents choose and understand child care—to influence learning by delivering both self and response efficacy. Self-efficacy, or messages that convey that parents are up to the task of choosing care wisely and monitoring for safety should be, according to the model, made more explicit for parents. These elements are detailed, both with and without self-efficacy messaging in the following charts.

+ Media-Driven Child Care Fear, *Star Tribune* Series The Extended Parallel Processing Model



+ Media-Driven Child Care Fear, *Star Tribune* Series, Injected Self Efficacy The Extended Parallel Processing Model



The research presented suggests that parents exposed to frightening information about their children's well-being may be uniquely ready to learn and act, if they engage with carefully calibrated messages that highlight solutions. The leading fear appeal and persuasion researchers introduced here would likely see an unexplored opportunity in the widespread, negative—and accurate—(Cohn, 2013) coverage of child care that has so concerned and confounded child care advocates. Cacioppo and Petty might suggest a rare moment of focus is created by these conversations. Witte and Jackson would likely advise that the creation of carefully crafted messages of action and empowerment would allow advocates to join the conversations underway and inject purpose and direction.

Rothman might caution that unless the perceptions parents bring to the discussion are well understood, questionable assumptions will prevail. These thinkers, when imagined in collective dialog, offer the possibility of a way forward for Minnesota parents. With this in mind, the following hypotheses and research questions will explore parents' relationship to child care and safety threats in child care.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Research Questions:

- 1) How do negative messages influence parents' information seeking on quality child care?
- 2) Do parents interpret negative media messages on child care as a threat relevant to their own children?
- 3) Will parents exposed to negative, fear-inducing information about child care retain more actionable, relevant information on child care quality?
- 4) How does self-efficacy, or a lack thereof, influence parents' ability to absorb and retain actionable, relevant information on child care quality?

Hypotheses:

- 1) Recent negative child care coverage has motivated parents to learn more and created a sense of urgency to take action.
- 2) When coupled with a sense of self-efficacy and actionable information on identifying quality child care (response efficacy) negative messaging will lead to increased learning.

Research Method and Data Collection**To explore hypothesis 1:**

- A Child Care Aware **service data analysis** reveals the numbers of parents requesting child care information and support following the negative child care coverage.
- Five parents were recruited for **in-depth interviews** on the topic. These parents were recruited from September to October of 2011 using the author's personal contacts and by the Child Care Aware community outreach staff. These interviewees were thanked for their time with a \$30 Target gift card purchased by Child Care Aware of Minnesota.

To explore hypothesis 2:

Thirty-eight parents of young children (under 5 years of age) who have never used Child Care Aware services were recruited to participate in an **exploratory, quasi-experiment** based on pre-and post-service surveys (Appendix 4 and 5). From April to June 2013, parents calling the statewide child care information line were invited to participate in the study. The recruitment script can be found in Appendix 2. Those who expressed a willingness to participate were screened to ensure they met the criteria. Participants were thanked for their time with a \$30 Target gift card purchased by Child Care Aware of Minnesota.

Exploratory Quasi-Experiment, Survey Outline

Data Elements	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Survey 1	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exposure, <i>Star Tribune</i> Series	✓	✓		
Survey 1a	✓	✓	✓	✓
Child Care Consult:				
<i>Self-efficacy</i>	✓		✓	
<i>No Self-efficacy</i>		✓		✓

One half of the parents were directed to:

- Complete an eight-question survey on their feelings about the importance of child care, level of trust in care and the role parents should play in ensuring high-quality care for their children.
- The next day, these parents received an email asking them to read the *Star Tribune* series on infant deaths and lack of regulations in child care. They were then asked to immediately repeat Survey 1.
- The parents were then divided into two equal groups and contacted by phone the following day to conduct a child care consult. Only half received empowering messages of self-efficacy.

One half of the parents were used as a control group and directed to move through the process described above without any exposure to the negative messaging in the *Star Tribune* series.

Exploratory Quasi-Experiment Survey Design**Group 1: Article Exposure, Self-Efficacy**

The child care consult-script opened with empowering information highlighting the active role parents can take in ensuring safe, quality care and information on quality child care. The messages used are as follows: “Parents know their children best and are great at choosing the right care for their children by

asking the right questions. It is important for them to be sure the care continues to be a good fit by staying involved and asking lots of questions throughout their children's time in care."

Parents received standard Child Care Aware follow up information (including a concise recap of the phone consult and several warm, personal stories highlighting the information) through the mail. The following week they received a final contact asking them to repeat Survey 1 and to answer five additional questions designed to test their knowledge of the information shared.

Group 2: Article Exposure, No Self-Efficacy

The child care consult-script focused only on the practical steps of a child care search and contained no information about steps to take in using this information or the parental role in choosing quality (self-efficacy messages). These parents also received the standard Child Care Aware follow up information through the mail and, a week later, a final contact asking them to repeat Survey 1 and to answer five additional questions designed test their knowledge of the information shared.

Group 3: No Article, Self-Efficacy

As with Group 1, parents in Group 3 were exposed to empowering messages at the beginning of the child care consult-script. The messages used are as follows: "Parents know their children best and are great at choosing the right care for their children by asking the right questions. It is important for them to be sure the care continues to be a good fit by staying involved and asking lots of questions throughout their children's time in care."

They then received standard follow up information by mail and, a week later, a final contact asking them to repeat Survey 1 and to answer five additional questions designed test their knowledge of the quality indicators shared.

Group 4: No Article, No Self-Efficacy

As with Group 2, Group 4 parents received a child care consult focused on the practical matters of choosing child care with no explicit self-efficacy highlighted. They received follow up information by mail and, a week later, a final contact asking them to repeat Survey 1 and to answer five additional questions designed test their knowledge of the educational information shared.

In-Depth Interview Design, Overview

Using Gerald Zaltman's (1995) Metaphor Elicitation Technique, five participants were asked to consider their families' child care stories and to bring several images—photographs or magazine clippings—that captured this story to a one-on-one interview. While these interviews took place before the media stories explored in this paper, they provide relevant context as interviewees repeatedly referenced earlier frightening media stories and negative child care messages received in other ways.

In-Depth Interview Design

1. Parents were asked to tell their child care story and introduce the images they collected.
2. They were then asked to describe any elements of the story that are important but for which the subject was unable to find an appropriate image.
3. Next, parents were asked to sort the images into collections or piles that represent important threads or components of the story.
4. The interviewer then posed simple probing questions—as necessary—to determine why the subject has sorted the images in the chosen way.
5. The subjects were asked to choose the image that best captures their child care story.
6. The subjects were asked to describe images that capture the opposite of those selected as most important.
7. The subjects were then asked to describe the way child care is experienced using additional senses (taste, touch, smell, color, sound and emotions).

8. Finally, the interviewer reviewed the constructs noted through the discussion to ensure they match the subjects' understanding of the conversation.
9. A "consensus map" was created to highlight recurring themes from the interviews and to highlight insights relevant to the hypothesis.

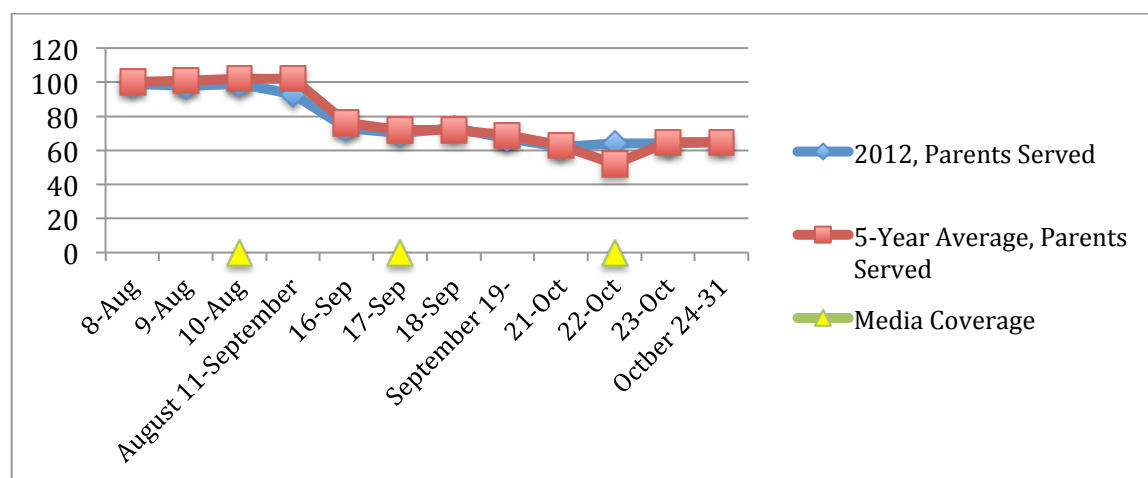
Findings

Section 1: Results - Research Questions and Related Data

Research question 1: How do negative messages influence parents' information seeking on quality child care?

Results: According to the service data analysis, parents did not reach out to Child Care Aware in higher numbers following negative child care coverage (Child Care Aware, 2008-2012). There was no increase in call volume or website visits following the three stories. While both metrics—web visits and calls—vary from August to September to October, these fluctuations follow a predictable yearly upswing in service demand just before school begins (Child Care Aware of Minnesota, 2008-2013). The data captured reflects services delivered the day before, the day of (or the first week day following) a story, the day after a story and the days following each story. They also reflect the 5-year averages for parents served for each of these time periods.

Parents Served Daily By Child Care Aware Following 2012 Child Care Coverage and in Earlier Years



Research question 2: Do parents interpret negative media messages on child care as a threat relevant to their own children?

Results: The exploratory quasi-experiment showed that parents exposed to the *Star Tribune* series express heightened concern about their children's experiences in child care. Nearly all of recruited parents (38 of 40) completed the pre-and-post service surveys that made up the exploratory quasi-experiment, including the repeated completion of Survey 1 designed to gauge their sense of threat. Two parents began the process and then failed to complete the surveys required.

- Among parents surveyed, those exposed to the *Star Tribune* series were:
 - Sixty-one percent more likely to suggest that the rules in place to monitor child care are not strong enough (66 percent compared to 5 percent of non-exposed parents).
 - Nineteen percent more likely to say "the care program my child attends makes a big difference in my child's well-being" (89 percent as compared to 70 percent of the non-exposed parents).
 - Twenty percent more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, "Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job" (45 percent as opposed to 25 percent of the non-exposed parents).
 - Twenty seven percent more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, "If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons." (72 percent, as compared to 45 percent of the non-exposed parents).

The remaining survey questions elicited statistically similar responses from the parents in and out of the control group. Complete results can be found in Appendix 7.

Parents participating in the in-depth interviews mentioned negative news coverage an average of twice.

Of the four who referenced negative news coverage, all cited their own experiences in child care and

frightening stories from other parents first and placed images representing these primary experiences as more important than those related to the media stories when asked to identify the most important or representative image.

Research questions 3 and 4:

Will parents exposed to negative, fear-inducing information about child care retain more actionable, relevant information on child care quality?

How does self-efficacy, or a lack thereof, influence parents' ability to absorb and retain actionable, relevant education on child care quality?

Results: The results of the exploratory quasi-experiment (survey 1A) show that parents exposed to the negative news stories retain more information. However, there is no significant difference in retention between those who received self-efficacy messaging and those who did not.

- Subjects exposed to the negative news coverage answered 3 of 5 content questions correctly. The control group—those not exposed to the negative news—answered an average of 2 correctly.
- The parents exposed to the *Star Tribune* series offered more depth in open-ended question responses than those in the control group. In fact, they wrote twice as much in the comment fields and offered 30 percent more in content in their retention answers.

Section 2: Discussion – Hypotheses and Results

Hypothesis 1: Recent negative child care coverage has motivated parents to learn more and created a sense of urgency to take action.

This hypothesis is supported by the exploratory quasi-experiment and in-depth interviews but not by the service data analysis. First, the absence of increased calls or website visits to Child Care Aware—despite 75 percent unaided name recognition among parents¹ (Chase, 2011)—suggests that parents were not certain that they should search for new care or become educated about care they are using. While it is unreasonable to assume that all parents would use Child Care Aware to take these steps, the fact that a consistent percentage of parents do call Child Care Aware for services in other circumstances—the annual fall rush for after-school care for example—supports the suggestion that some parents would call Child Care Aware if inspired to act. Parents who may have contacted other well known support services (such as United Way or 2-1-1) would have been referred to Child Care Aware.

Next, subjects' self-described urgency—in terms of trust of, expressed importance of and views of regulation of child care—was strongly influenced by exposure to the *Star Tribune* series. These parents are notably more likely to describe child care as very important to their individual child's well-being, under-regulated and unworthy of trust. These parents disagree with the following statements in significantly higher percentages: "If I did not need child care I would not use it," and "Most child care providers can be trusted." Finally, of the three questions in which the control group and the media-exposed group answered in statistically similar ways, two reflect areas in which the control group expressed concern or information seeking regarding their child care experiences: 71 percent of all parents surveyed reported that good child care is "hard to find" while nine out of ten suggested they would ask "any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being."

Finally, parents who participated in the in-depth interviews suggested that negative media coverage uncovers existing fears around child care and that personal experiences in child care and stories shared by other parents create a foundation for this fear.

1. Name recognition surveys reflect awareness of "Child Care Resource and Referral" before the recent rebrand to Child Care Aware of Minnesota.

In other words, negative media coverage was mentioned repeatedly as confirmation of, rather than an introduction to, the problem. Nonetheless, the sense of urgency to take action to ensure their children's safety created by negative messages—from several sources—was evident throughout the interviews.

This concern was represented in 19 of the 34 images presented by the parents and they clustered these images together when asked to sort them. One mother called this stack the “chronic worry story.” This theme is evidenced in the excerpts pulled from two parent interviews and the consensus map that follows below.

Interview 1: Ted, father of Rosie, age 12 and Benjamin, age 10

First Image, Interviewee Intro: Ted began the interview by presenting a head-lice treatment ad to describe why he has never used child care for his children.

“I will never trust some daycare provider with my child. I would have no idea if their days would be aimless and lonely and that's no way to grow up.”

Images:

He presented 7 images of child care including:

- A cluttered, patchy lawn pictured in a lawn care ad
- A head-lice treatment ad
- Two children sitting on a “time out,” or being punished, in an ad for a parenting book
- A Fruit loops advertisement
- A news clipping detailing children locked in backyard shed by their child care provider.

Narrative:

1. According to Ted, child care feels **“like a scary movie you're too young to see.”** It tastes like “sugary cereal you're not allowed to have at home.”

2. When asked to broaden one of his images, Ted chose the Fruit Loops ad and said next to the Fruit Loops box (and outside of the ad space) is a group of children eating out of the box and fighting for the cereal. He described this image as similar to the punishment and lawn images as they were all different moments of the same child's day.
3. The vignette shared by Ted involved a **small boy (Ted, himself) wandering around a cold yard much of an afternoon without a jacket. Another child wandered with him and taught him to swear.**

"We were just dropped off and left there. There are hard, metal edges to everything. There's a swing set with sharp, broken pieces to the slide. Metal trucks sticking up out of the dirt that can trip you if you try to run and play. There are no adults anywhere. No one knows what the rules are or who will enforce them." When asked what that felt like he reported, "that feels scary."

Interview 2: Shareen, mother of Ruby, age 6 and Rose, age 7

First Image, Interviewee Intro: Shareen began with two photos of her husband caring for her young daughters as infants at home. She linked them to three additional images she said represented the ways in which her children's child care experiences are different from her own. She described the stack of images this way, "My girls were not bundled up on cold mornings and sent over to neighbors' houses or to child care. They were not moved around all the time. They slept when they wanted to and had a very small world to start with. I think that's how it should be when they're tiny. They had comfort and security."

Images and Narrative:

1. Shareen shared an image of her younger daughter at ten months, when she was enrolled in child care. The little girl had a rash on her cheeks. She was separated from her sister for several months, as their first-choice child care program did not have room for both girls.

*“This is a picture of a kid who’s trying to smile but can’t. I did not feel like I could drop in and check on her. **She seemed stressed out and she would cry and cry when I left. I wondered if she was crying all day.** She developed eczema, I always thought from the stress of this change. Another mom told me her baby never adjusted to this daycare and never bonded or connected with the daycare staff.”*

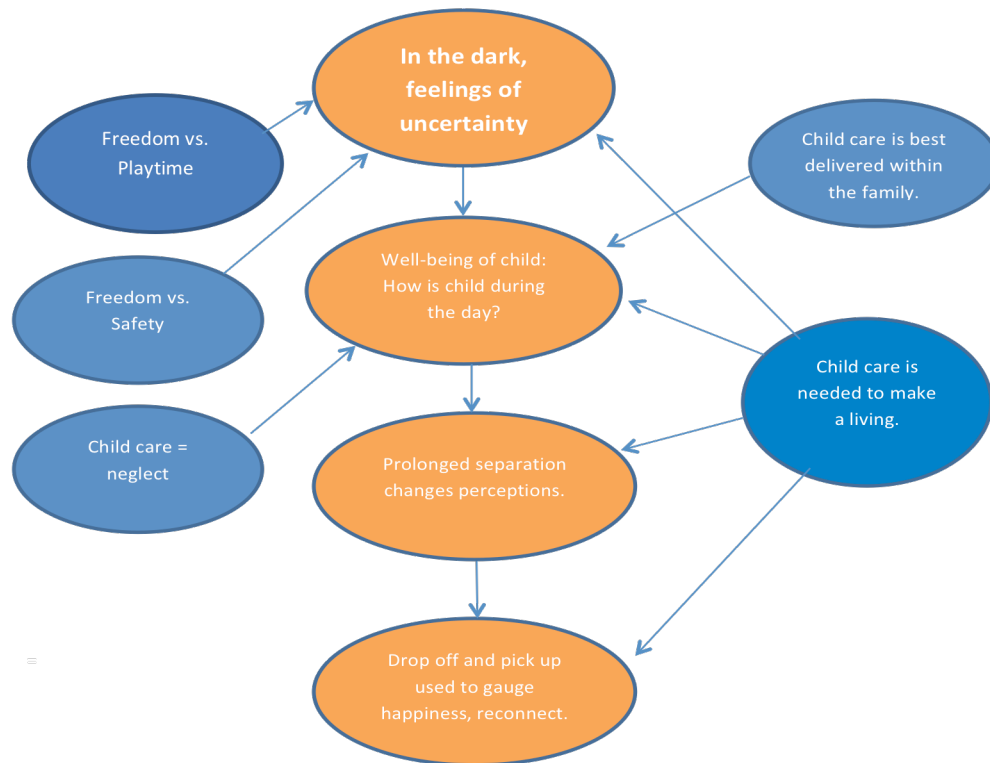
1. Outside the visible edges of a chosen image, that of group of toddlers coloring at a table, she described orderly cabinets and toy bins.

*“It’s a little strange how tidy this place was considering it was full of little kids. One of the moms said that was good marketing for the parents to keep it this way but less happy for the little kids. **When all this was going on I read about sexual abuse at a home daycare. Can you imagine, those tiny kids? I was happy to get her out of there and into the program with her sister. I felt like they could look out for each other and the older one could let me know what was going on.**”*

2. According to Shareen, child care feels like playtime. It smells like sand and baby shampoo. It sounds like babies babbling and learning to talk.
3. The vignette shared by Shareen described dropping off both daughters at their current child care program. *“Ruby did not cry at our new place, even the first day. It was quiet and calm and peaceful and there was a huge playground out back. I dropped them off and then cried in the car because the worst chapter in my life as a parent was all over.”*

Child Care Constructs

Consensus Map



Hypothesis 2: When coupled with a sense of self-efficacy and actionable information on identifying quality child care, negative messaging will lead to increased learning.

The data gleaned from the exploratory quasi-experiment provide partial support for this hypothesis.

While parents exposed to the negative news stories retained more information than their control group counterparts, those who received self-efficacy messages did not perform better on retention surveys than those who were exposed to the news stories alone.

On average, they answered 3 of 5 content questions—asked in survey 1A—correctly as opposed to parents not exposed to the coverage, who answered an average of 2 correctly. (A scoring key can be found in Appendix 6) They offered more depth in open-ended response questions that invited parents to explain or expand upon their answers. This suggests, anecdotally, an increase in engagement with the content and issue.

There was, however, no significant difference in demonstrated retention between those who received explicit self-efficacy messaging and those who did not. Both groups exposed to the negative media stories scored an average 20 percent higher on the retention survey as compared to those not exposed. It seems unwarranted to call into question the well-thought-of body of research supporting self-efficacy as a critical component of successful fear appeals. Instead, the unexpected results may relate to implied self-efficacy or delivery differences. First, the question of implied self-efficacy: Parents may understand the response efficacy and stories of positive child care embedded in the education consult to be self-efficacy. In other words, they may end the interaction with enough information to intuit the fact that they hold significant influence and control.

Next, while sitting in on the child care consult calls, the author noted a distinct difference in cadence, tone and open-ended conversation delivered by the various parent educators participating. While all the parent educators have a highly proscribed script to follow, personality emerged in the delivery style. Researchers—such as Cersario, Higgins and Scholer (2007)—have demonstrated tone to be a significant contributor to message perception and processing. This too could account for some of the unexpected learning within the group not afforded explicit self-efficacy. Since one parent educator was assigned to the entire group of parents exposed to media but not self-efficacy messages, her uniquely positive and encouraging approach could conceivably change the parents' experience.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Because of the noted differences in delivery style from one parent educator to another, the research model should be adapted to ensure a randomized assignment of parent educators to parents from the various research groups. Randomizing across geography will solve another unanticipated issue: communities targeted in an ad campaign highlighting Parent Aware, a new Star Rating system for child care, overlapped with the exploratory experiment's control group (Groups 3 and 4). Therefore, their answer to our Parent Aware-focused retention survey question may reflect learning related to the ad campaign and not the child care consult. When the study was originally designed, the ad campaign was planned for equal targeting, across the exploratory experiment's four groups.

Next, parents may have been exposed to the *Star Tribune* series prior to participating in the exploratory experiment. Efforts to screen for this exposure proved difficult as early parent recruits insisted they always read the paper and were distracted by the perceived implication that they were ill informed. The implication of this screening difficulty is that parents thought to be unexposed to the media, and tested within the control groups, may have in fact been exposed to the articles.

Another limitation of the study is the relatively small sample size. While higher demonstrated retention was noted consistently among parents exposed to the fear-inducing media, the sample size is not large enough to conclude that this outcome could be generalized.

Next, there were notable differences in parents' survey responses immediately after reading the alarming news stories and a week later. For example, parents suggesting the rules overseeing child care are "Not strong enough" dropped by 22 percent and those disagreeing with the statement, "Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job caring for children" dropped 11 percent. This change was

not consistent enough across survey questions to suggest a widespread drop in urgency. However, these findings do suggest more research is needed to learn when and to what degree parents' urgency, and presumably their focus and subsequent ability to learn more, fades after exposure to frightening coverage. While this question goes beyond the focus of this paper, it has emerged as a relevant question with important implications for its use.

Future research should explore the composition of self-efficacy to discover where it overlaps with response efficacy and to determine the degree to which it is best delivered explicitly or implicitly through demonstration and storytelling. Many of the most compelling examples of fear appeals contain both an implied and explicit delivery of self-efficacy messaging and it may prove valuable to determine which is most important. For example, the anti-methamphetamine "Not Even Once" campaign (The Partnership at Drugfree.org, 2006) offers the clear direction to avoid dabbling in this dangerous drug. It also, however, embeds a narrative in the ads that creates an undercurrent of self-efficacy. The idea that awful scenarios—such as trading sex in a dirty parking lot for \$16 or leaving a good friend for dead in an alleyway—are much more difficult than avoiding meth all together is clear. Could these shocking stories really work independently of the copy "Not Even Once" or vice versa?

Child Care Aware Recommendations

While more exploration of the dimensions and delivery of efficacy is needed to fully leverage the fear-inducing conversation on child care, the findings suggest such study is warranted and that increased visibility during peaks in negative child care coverage would serve Child Care Aware well.

The findings suggest that Child Care Aware should proactively illustrate the relevance of parent empowerment to regulation stories in order to take advantage of the temporary attention afforded the issue. This approach will be a dramatic change of course. The Minnesota chapter of Child Care Aware

typically avoids participation in negative, frightening news coverage. The organization should participate in these media conversations in order to make them more productive while also increasing advertising, and social media activity during these times.

The organization's vision—ensuring quality care and education for every child—can only be achieved by conversing with large audiences of parents *when* they are receptive to support and information. A “Get Child Care Aware,” lunch-and-learn webinar co-sponsored by the *Star Tribune* following negative child care coverage offers one such connection. A social media campaign designed to complement news coverage with actionable information—such as tips to ensuring safe sleep spaces at child care as one example—offers another such connection point.

Child Care Aware of America has expressed an interest in continuing this research and affording it the sample size and randomization required to test the hypotheses explored here. The conversation is worth the effort: Communicators charged with informing the child care discussion must find a way to give voice to every abused, neglected and warehoused child and every disempowered, terrified parent. Fear is an apt response to the child care situation and may also provide the motivation needed to address the community-wide dilemma it represents.

References

- Bartels, Kelly & Rothman (2010). Moving beyond the function of the health behavior: The effect of message frame on behavioural decision-making. *Psychology and Health*.
- Cesario, Higgins & Scholer (2007). Regulatory fit and persuasion: Basic principles and remaining questions. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*.
- Chase, Richard (2010). Child Care Use in Minnesota. Wilder Research.
- Child Care Aware of Minnesota (2010-2012). Data Tracking Program; NACCRRAware.
- Cohn, Jonathan (April, 2013). The hell of American daycare. *The New Republic*.
- Gallagher, Updegraff, Rothman & Sims (2011). Perceived susceptibility to breast cancer moderates the effect of gain- and loss-framed messages on use of screening mammography. *Health Psychology*, 30(2).
- Ito, Larsen, Smith & Cacioppo (1998). Negative information weighs more heavily on the brain: the negativity bias in evaluative categorizations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 75(4): 887-900.
- Jackson, P., Center, A., Smith, S. Stansberry, F. (2009). Public Relations Practices: Managerial Case Studies and Problems. (13).
- Lerner & Keltner (2001). Fear, anger and risk. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 81(1).
- Leventhal (1971). Fear appeals and persuasion: the differentiation of a motivational construct. *American Journal of Public Health*. 61(6).
- Maloney, Lapinski & Witte (2011). Fear appeals and persuasion: a review and update of the extended parallel process model. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*.
- McAlister, A., Morrison, T.C., Hu, S., Meshack, A.F., Ramirez, A., Gallion, K., & Huang, P. (2004). Media and Community Campaign Effects on Adult Tobacco Use in Texas. *Journal of Health Communication*.
- Minnesota Department of Human Services (2012). License Minnesota. *North Star Licensing Guide*.
- Olson, Schrade, Parents often turn blind eye to faulty home day care, *Star Tribune*, August 27, 2012
- Olson, Schrade, Pushed by grieving parents, Kansas makes sweeping reforms, *Star Tribune*, September 16, 2012
- Olson, Schrade, Home daycares present extra set of challenges, *Star Tribune*, October 21, 2012
- Partnership at Drugree.org, Not Even Once Campaign, 2005. Retrieved from:
<http://www.methproject.org/about/>.

Schrade, Lawyer: Farmington day-care provider is being made a scapegoat after baby's death while sleeping, *Star Tribune*, August 9, 2012

Schrade, Sexual abusers in daycares are often other kids, *Star Tribune*, October 21, 2012

Petty, R.E. & Cacioppo, J.T, (1986). The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. *Advances in Experimental Psychology*, vol. 19.

Rogers (1975). A protection motivation theory of fear appeals and attitude change. *The Journal of Psychology*, 91(1): 93-114.

Rothman, Wlaschin, Bartels, Latimer & Salovey (2008). How persons and situations regulate message framing effects: The study of health behavior. In A. Elliot (ed.) *Handbook of approach and avoidance motivation*, Psychology Press.

Rothman & Salovey (1997). Shaping perceptions to motivate healthy behavior: the role of message framing. *Psychological Bulletin*. 121(1).

Rucker, Derek D., Petty, Richard E. (2006) Increasing the effectiveness of communications to consumers: recommendations based on Elaboration Likelihood. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, Spring2006, Vol. 25 Issue 1, p39-52, 14p OR site 1986, Central and Peripheral Routes to attitude change.

Taylor, S. E. (1991). Asymmetrical effects of positive and negative events: The mobilization-minimization hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 110, 67-85.

Schmidt & Zank (2012). A genuine foundation for prospect theory. *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*. 45: 97-113.

Schweinhart, Lawrence J. (2005). Lifetime Effects: The HighScope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 40

Tversky & Kahneman (1992). Advances in prospect theory: cumulative representation of uncertainty. *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*.

Witte & Allen (2000). A meta-analysis of fear appeals: implications for effective public health campaigns. *Health Educations and Behavior*.

Wohl, Jen & Traill, Saskia (2003). Economic Impact of the Child Care Industry in Minnesota. *Insight Center for Community Economic Development*.

Yan, Dillard & Shen (2012). Emotion, motivation, and the persuasive effects of message framing. *Journal of Communication*.

Zaltman & Higie Coulter (1995). Seeing the Voice of the Customer: Metaphor-Based Advertising Research. Journal of Advertising Research.

Appendix 1

Star Tribune Series, "The Day Care Threat"

Panel urges child-care safety fixes

Article by: [JEREMY OLSON](#), Star Tribune

Updated: September 7, 2012 - 11:20 PM

Recommendations include giving providers better training to protect sleeping infants.

Responding to a sharp increase in child-care deaths, a special state panel recommended Friday that Minnesota adopt tougher standards for safety training and license enforcement of in-home child-care providers.

A 31-member board of experts in pathology, law enforcement, pediatrics and other specialties issued the recommendations after reviewing 10 years of child mortality records.

Three-fourths of the 86 deaths since 2002 involved sleeping infants, so the panel recommended that child-care providers get improved training on safe sleep guidelines, such as putting infants on their backs without thick blankets or other suffocation hazards.

"Some providers, they think when they put a soft cuddly object or comforter in a crib with an infant, that they're helping," said Lucinda Jesson, commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services, which oversees child-care licensing. "Well, that's not helping. That's putting that baby at risk."

The panel also recommended that providers automatically lose their licenses if infants in their care are found in unapproved sleep positions, and that they be required to get written clearance from doctors before overriding safe-sleep guidelines when putting infants to sleep.

Many of the recommendations address issues raised by an ongoing Star Tribune investigation of deaths in child care. Newspaper stories, for example, noted that basic inspection data is often inaccessible to concerned parents. The state now recommends that county "correction orders" issued against providers be posted online and that all licensed providers carry liability insurance.

Three of the deaths in the state report took place in child-care centers; the rest occurred in licensed home-based care.

Overcrowding

The state panel raised particular concern that one in 10 of the deaths involved providers who were operating over their licensed capacities.

"This limits the ability of child care providers to provide appropriate supervision to all children in their care, especially the youngest and most vulnerable," the report stated.

Beyond better enforcement of adult-child ratios, the panel recommended that the state reduce the ratios for providers when the children in their care include infants and toddlers.

A coalition that includes the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association recommended earlier this year that one provider in a home day care watch no more than two infants, and that any lone provider with two infants have no more than six children in total.

Minnesota's licensing standards for home-based care allow some lone providers to have up to 10 children in care while watching up to two infants, and other lone providers to have up to 12 children in care while watching a single infant. The state panel recommended that the state adopt the new national ratios.

Jesson sent a letter to legislative leaders, seeking their support in the upcoming session for tougher safety standards.

Balancing act

The delicate balance with increased licensing requirements is that they could become so cumbersome that good providers quit. The state has seen a decline over the past decade in licensed home child-care providers -- even as the number of preschool-age children has increased.

A reduction in the child-to-adult supervision ratio, for example, would slash earnings for in-home providers, who already make relatively low annual salaries, said Dan Wielinski, a board member for the Minnesota Licensed Family Child Care Association.

"The cost would either be passed on to the parents or we could see a decrease in the number of family licensed providers as this will make it impossible for them to stay in business," he said.

The association's policy committee is reviewing the recommendations. Wielinski said he supported the panel's calls for increased oversight and inspections, especially of providers with violation histories, and safe sleep waivers only when infants had documented medical reasons for them.

The association has advocated additional state funding for mentoring programs so that top child-care providers could train new providers.

The panel's recommendations include 40 hours of training for in-home providers prior to earning their licenses and 24 hours of training every year after that. Licensed providers currently complete eight hours of annual training.

Jesson said some recommendations in the report are "common sense" and wouldn't increase costs or put new pressure on the child-care industry. Posting more inspection results online would help inform parents so that they could become better consumers of child-care services.

The state issues suspensions and revocations of child-care licenses, but county inspectors actually monitor the home day cares. Jesson said the state needs to work with counties to improve consistency on how they inspect homes and when they issue sanctions.

Jeremy Olson • 612-673-7744

Pushed by grieving parents, Kansas makes sweeping reforms

Article by: [BRAD SCHRADE](#), Star Tribune

Updated: September 17, 2012 - 10:15 AM

Results could hold lessons for Minnesota, other states.

OVERLAND PARK, KAN. - Armed with an iPad and a sense of mission, Kathy Griffin patrols the leafy streets of this Kansas City suburb, on the lookout for child-care providers who put kids at risk.

A day-care inspector with Johnson County, she is an amiable mix of teacher, coach and enforcer -- dropping in unannounced, advising providers who ask for help and correcting those who go astray.

Griffin works the front lines of child-care regulation in Kansas, a state that confronted safety lapses five years ago and now receives national accolades from child advocates. In 2007, young children were dying at the rate of one per month in Kansas child-care facilities. A determined effort by grieving parents and frustrated regulators resulted in sweeping changes. So far this year, just one child has died. "I think it's made providers more accountable," Griffin says.

As Minnesota grapples with its own troubled record -- child-care deaths have doubled in the past five years, often in cases with egregious safety violations -- Kansas offers one example of a path to reform.

Just two years ago, a national watchdog group ranked Kansas 41st in the country for regulation of in-home child care. This year, the state shot to third.

"Kansas is a good example of advocates coming together, largely led by parents, working in a bipartisan way in a very conservative state to get some basic protections for children," said Grace Reef, policy chief for Child Care Aware of America, which produced the rankings. "The way it all came together in Kansas, I really think it was historic."

Haunting image

You can't travel far in Kansas child advocacy circles without hearing about Lexie Engelman or seeing a picture of the adorable 1-year-old in pigtails holding a bright red ball. The photo sits in offices of lawmakers and on desks of advocates in Topeka. A sketch of the image hangs in her parents' bedroom at their home in Overland Park, where today Bryan and Kim Engelman are raising the younger brother and sister Lexie never had the chance to meet.

The photo was taken at a family gathering in Minnesota in July 2004, a month before the toddler died from injuries she suffered on her third day at a home day care in a Kansas City suburb. Left unsupervised on the lower level of the home, the little girl became trapped between a playpen and a wall and suffered injuries from asphyxiation that proved fatal.

Bryan and Kim grieved for months, but over time discovered that Lexie's death reflected broader failures. Kansas' day-care system suffered from lax supervision, poor provider training and weak state enforcement. Some facilities were never inspected, and licensing records were often inaccessible to curious parents.

Like Minnesota today, Kansas kept many of its inspection reports buried in government files, not online for public scrutiny. And like several Minnesota families, the Engelmans learned after it was too late that the woman caring for their child had a history of violations. They grew determined to fix the problems.

"Dealing with loss, we chose to do something proactive and try to help others," said Bryan, who grew up in the Twin Cities suburb of Rosemount and met Kim when they were undergraduates at St. Cloud State University.

A pattern emerges

For years, nobody tracked how many children were dying in Kansas day-care facilities. Rachel Berroth stumbled across that fact almost by accident in 2007, when she started charting deaths in her job for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), the state's chief child-care regulator. Eventually, Berroth turned the project into her master's thesis at Kansas State.

Building on Berroth's Excel spreadsheet, the agency rewrote its investigative procedures and began tracking detailed information from death scenes. The initial data was alarming.

In many of the deaths, providers had placed infants in unsafe sleep positions for naps, such as on their stomachs or in adult beds. The children were often sleeping in remote parts of the providers' homes with doors closed -- left unchecked for long periods. In Kansas' death cases, the data showed, the average time between nap checks was 48 minutes.

Many of the same lapses turn up today in Minnesota.

In Kansas, regulators scoured the patterns for critical clues to improving safety. "It's getting to the truth," said Berroth, now the director of KDHE's Bureau of Family Health. "That's what our forms and our standardized investigation did for us. We got to the nitty gritty and the detail."

A feeling of betrayal

State regulators had tried for years to tighten up Kansas' system, introducing or supporting various bills in the state legislature. Each year, the results were the same -- the bills went nowhere.

Then, in the spring of 2009, an 18-month-old toddler named Ava Patrick died on her first day at an overcrowded day care in Johnson County, not far from the Engelmans' home.

Frustrated by another tragedy, the couple sent their state senator a pointed e-mail. "This time it's in your backyard," it read. "Are you going to do something?"

Ava's parents, Steve and Alecia Patrick, were angered to learn that their provider had a history of complaints and violations. Her state licensing file ran to hundreds of pages. "We had a feeling of betrayal and being lied to," said Alecia Patrick.

A month later, Ava's parents met the Engelmans, and the couples organized a grassroots group with an eye toward reforming the system. In July 2009, they created a Facebook group, "Safe Children in Child Care." Within hours, they had 78 members. That fall, a child advocacy group, Kansas Action for Children, joined them to help lobby at the Capitol.

After months of debate, testimony and political wrangling, Lexie's Law passed and was signed into law in the spring of 2010. The Engelmans and Patricks made as many as three dozen trips to Topeka in those months to testify and press lawmakers.

Parent activism may be one factor that has set Kansas apart from Minnesota.

"What really made the difference was having parents who lost a child visible at the statehouse," said Shannon Cotsoradis, president and CEO of Kansas Action for Children. "Having lawmakers have to look at those parents in the gallery, I think it just raised the stakes. ... It was much harder to vote no."

Reforms take hold

Two years later, Kansas is still implementing Lexie's Law, but changes have reverberated across the state.

Regulators now inspect all 7,000 child-care facilities at least once a year, including a segment of small in-home facilities that used to be inspected only if officials received a complaint. The law also raised education requirements for providers and spells out expectations in certain critical areas, such as supervision and safe sleep practices. For example, providers in Kansas now must check on sleeping infants at least every 15 minutes and can't have children napping behind closed doors.

This year, the state launched a new website containing inspection reports -- filed digitally by regulators such as Griffin -- giving parents easy access to safety and quality data.

Some providers initially balked at the changes, viewing them as an insult to good practitioners and a regulatory overreach that seemed to criminalize their profession. Yet today, many have accepted the law, even if they still have quibbles with the implementation.

"It did help make things safer for the kids," said Dianne Echohawk, an in-home day-care operator for 37 years. "I think [the changes] are all good. I think there could have been a gentler hand that put them in place."

Emily Edwards, a veteran provider in Topeka, said she went into the new training thinking there was nothing she could learn. But in each course, she said, she has picked up new knowledge, such as research showing that infants tend to be at greatest risk in the first days at a new day care.

"I learned amazing things," Edwards said. "Now the first week or two after I get a new baby, I'll be so much more observant."

Sen. Laura Kelly, a Democrat who led a bipartisan effort on Lexie's Law in the Senate, said its explicit language gives providers clear guidance and fosters consistency across a sprawling system operating in 105 counties.

Kelly said it's too early to tell the full impact of the law, but she says the early indicators are encouraging.

"Just putting the spotlight on this really helped our providers and our provider support groups," Kelly said. "They just had a better idea what they should do."

Brad Schrade • 612-673-4777

Sexual abusers in day cares are often other kids

Article by: [BRAD SCHRADE](#) and [JEREMY OLSON](#), Star Tribune staff writers

Updated: October 22, 2012 - 9:48 AM

More than 65 children have been sexually abused in Minnesota child-care facilities since 2007 in cases often linked to supervision failures by in-home providers, a Star Tribune investigation has found.

In most cases the abuse was committed by older children in day care or a son of the day-care provider -- not by an adult, according to a review of hundreds of pages of state licensing records and law enforcement reports.

In December 2009, for example, the teenage son of a St. Cloud provider was charged with repeatedly sexually assaulting a 5-year-old girl who napped in his room. In January 2011, a child-care operator in Benson, Minn., was reprimanded by state officials for failing to supervise a 13-year-old who was accused of exposing himself to a 4-year-old during a back-yard game of hide-and-seek. A month later, a Chaska provider lost her license after her 15-year-old son was accused of sexually assaulting a preschool girl while they were alone in a playroom.

Records suggest that state and county regulators took action when notified of allegations -- suspending operators' licenses or permanently shutting down day cares in more than 80 cases since 2007.

Nonetheless, the cases reflect a pattern of risk revealed by the Star Tribune's ongoing investigation of Minnesota's in-home day-care system. The dangers that surface in inspection records -- sleep deaths, household hazards, sexual abuse -- are most common in the same kind of child-care setting: a private home, where failures in judgment or supervision by a lone provider can put children in danger.

The Star Tribune's review of sex abuse cases has prompted state officials to take a closer look at their records, which show a clear pattern of abuse occurring when child-care providers failed to monitor what was happening in their homes.

"We know enough to know we have to do something about it," said Department of Human Services Inspector General Jerry Kerber. "Supervision [failure] leads to not only sexual abuse, but children wandering away -- serious injuries that children are experiencing in the homes."

State officials are also now considering a tougher approach to sex-abuse training for child-care operators. The state has encouraged providers to take abuse-prevention training since 2004, but records maintained by Kerber's agency show that only a tiny fraction of Minnesota's 11,000 in-home, or family, child-care providers have actually taken the safety training.

The records also show that sexual abuse, like child-care deaths analyzed by the newspaper, is much more common at in-home day-care facilities than at large child-care centers. At child-care centers, licensing records show one case of substantiated sexual abuse since 2007; that involved a student helper in a child-care center at Hennepin Technical College who was caught in possession of cellphone pictures of partly clothed children in a bathroom. State officials investigated 51 other complaints at child-care centers. Two were listed as "concerning" but not proven; the other investigations fell apart because the children couldn't repeat claims of abuse or because security camera footage or day-care workers contradicted them. None of the cases at centers involved claims of children abusing other children.

Cory Woosley says the risk of sex abuse can be overlooked because parents and providers are often blinded by common stereotypes about child predators.

"Most people say [the predator is] a man in a trench coat in the park," said Woosley, a training director with the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network.

In reality, research shows that 40 percent of child sex abuse is committed by other children or adolescents.

"It's not the man in the trench coat -- it's your neighbor, it's the older boy on the bus," Woosley said. "It is an eye-opener to people."

That misunderstanding creates unique risks at in-home day cares, where children of widely varying ages are often mixed together, and where the provider's own children and relatives often mingle with children in care.

Minnesota requires child-care providers to allow criminal background checks on anyone 13 or older living in their homes. But enforcement records suggest that a failure of background checks is seldom to blame for the sex abuse incidents; many young perpetrators simply don't have criminal records.

A promising strategy

Five years ago, Scott County had a spate of sex abuse allegations that alarmed county officials.

As they analyzed the cases, inspector Nancy Berndt says, regulators noticed two patterns: The providers' own children were usually the accused, and the misconduct was preventable.

The devastation for children and parents left a deep impact on Berndt, but she also remembers how the incidents rattled providers. Recalling one whose son was accused, Berndt said: "It was earth-shattering to this woman to think what her son may have or may not have done."

To alert child-care providers to the risks, Berndt helped design a safety course, "My Child Wouldn't Do That." It warns them that they could easily lose their businesses and find their own children facing criminal penalties.

Since the training took effect in 2010, sex abuse allegations in Scott County have fallen off, from about two each year to none in 2011 or 2012.

"What's very interesting is the feedback we get from providers" said Shona Buesgens, supervisor of the county's child-care licensing office. "One said: I'll never let my 15-year-old kid downstairs again with day-care kids without me."

Carrie Speikers, who worked in child-care centers for 14 years before opening her own home day care in 2004, found the course wonderful but "scary." Speikers, who has five children of her own, placed their bedrooms off limits to all children in care and bought an extra remote monitor. She also sat her own kids down for a family meeting to reinforce the importance of boundaries and the concept of good touch/bad touch.

"It made me really step back and think," Speikers said. "Every decision I make in the course of a day can affect so many families' lives, children's lives, my life, my family's life."

Since 2004 the state of Minnesota, too, has encouraged child-care providers to take a special training course on sex abuse prevention. But it has never made the training mandatory, and the take-up rate is modest. Records show that 483 family child-care providers have taken the course -- out of roughly 11,000 in the state -- along with 169 day-care center workers.

Kerber said that isn't good enough, and that the state is considering making training mandatory.

"People don't want to believe ... that their child would ever do something like that," Kerber said. "The kind of training necessary for those [providers] has to be very direct."

Lasting scars

Sex abuse in day care remains uncommon, considering that Minnesota has roughly 141,000 children in licensed care in a typical year.

To determine how often it occurred, and under what circumstances, the Star Tribune reviewed hundreds of licensing citations covering the last five years. State records showed 77 cases of sexual abuse: Of those, 11 involved boyfriends, spouses or relatives who were not licensed caregivers; three involved adults who were licensed providers; 49 named other children as the abusers.

The newspaper's tally of 65 victims is conservative because some incidents involved multiple but unspecified numbers of child victims. The count also omitted children who were victims of indecent exposure and cases where day-care children engaged in sexual contact and there was no clear perpetrator or victim. In six cases, the abuse did not involve a child in care. In five others, it was unclear if the victim was in child care or not.

The emotional impact of sexual abuse can be profound and enduring, said Libby Bergman, executive director of the Family Enhancement Center in [Minneapolis](#).

Child victims are less likely to talk about abuse, she said, but can manifest their ordeal through stress, nightmares, flashbacks and anxiety. In one of the Scott County cases, police reports show, a child victim who never liked baths suddenly wanted to take two or three a day.

"Every time a child is sexually abused there is the potential for lifelong emotional and, as we're finding out now, physical impacts," Bergman said. "It really has a huge ripple effect in the family and the community."

Data editor Glenn Howatt contributed to this report. brad.schrade@startribune.com • 612-673-4777 jeremy.olson@startribune.com • 612-673-7744

Appendix 2

Exploratory Quasi-Experiment Recruitment Script and follow up communication scripts

We are interested in learning more about the concerns of parents just like you as they choose child care.

I am currently recruiting parents who are willing to answer a few questions and read a few news articles before we complete their search. We are offering parents a \$35 Target gift card for their time in

completing several quick online surveys (29 questions total) and reading a few news articles before we complete their child care search together.

Are you interested in participating?

If no, simply proceed with the referral as you typically would. If yes, please continue with the script below.

Wonderful, I just have two quick questions that will allow me to be sure you're eligible to participate: Do you have children younger than five years of age? Do you have an email address I could use to send you the feedback survey?

If yes to both, continue. If no to either, thank them for their time and continue with a typical referral.

Great, we'd love to have you share feedback. I would like to send a quick survey your way. Please fill it out as soon as possible, will today work? I will then send you a link to a news article we'd like you to read and another short survey link tomorrow. Then I'll give you a call to help you find child care.

Finally, after we've completed our call and you've had time to look over the info I send you by mail, we'll ask you to answer a final short survey. That's it! Again, just 29 questions total. Can I take down your email address to get started?

Email and Link:

Thank you for your willingness to participate in our Parent Conversations Project. Please begin by following the link below and completing the short survey found. I hope you'll have a few moments to complete this survey today. I will be in touch by email tomorrow with a few news articles we'd like you to read and your next short set of questions. Then I'll give you a call to complete your child care consultation, follow up with your search information and one final set of questions.

Thank you again! Your thoughts on child care will help us better understand and serve parents just like you.

[sign off]

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CN576QY>

Welcome to day two of our three-day conversation! Just two quick steps for today:

1. Please follow the links below and read both news stories found.
<http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/health/168928266.html>
<http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/health/152163185.html>
2. Please complete our short survey (don't be surprised if this look similar to the survey you completed yesterday) <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JKDL3RL>
3. Welcome to the final survey questions for our Parent Conversations Project. As soon as we receive your feedback, we'll send out your Target gift card with our sincere thanks. Don't be surprised if today's survey looks familiar. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/J852DHL>

Appendix 3 Child Care Consult Script

I can help you with your child care search. To do a referral, I will gather information regarding the needs and preferences that are specific to your family, such as your child's ages, the hours and days needed and possible locations. Then I will send that out to you in a packet that will contain all the information we talk about today. The call will take about 10 minutes. Do you have time right now?

First of all, let me explain a couple of items to you. All of the information you give me is confidential. We do not share it with anyone else. It is used strictly for statistical purposes or for the purpose of finding child care that meets your family's needs. Also, all the names we give you are referrals, not recommendations. What this means is two different things. First of all, we are not the licensing agency, so we have no control over the providers. And two, we cannot recommend any one provider over another.

There are a couple of basic types of care available to you. The first option is a licensed family child care home. Like the name implies, the care takes place in the provider's home. It is usually smaller groups and mixed ages. So the infants, preschoolers and school age children are all together, much like a family setting. They are sometimes less structured, might have more flexibility with their schedule and tend to be less expensive. The second option is child care centers. They are in larger public buildings and the children are separated out according to age groups. So all the infants stay together, all the preschools stay together and all the school agers stay together. They are sometimes more structured, have little flexibility with their hours and tend to be more expensive.

The only programs we refer out are licensed or license exempt programs. Programs are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Centers are overseen by the state and family child care homes are overseen by the count where they are located. The focus of licensing is to protect basic health & safety regulations, as well as the basic well being of a child. They also ensure that the provider has met the minimum requirements for continued training. Please keep in mind that a license means that the program simply meets minimum standards and does not ensure the quality of the program. We strongly recommend that you compare up to three separate programs in your child care search and that you contact licensing to see if there are any negative actions or complaints against the provide before you enroll your child in care. I'll explain in a few moments how you can contact them.

The area that you are searching is part of a project in Minnesota called Parent Aware. It is a voluntary rating system that the provider can participate in. The program rates providers in 5 basic areas. They are Family partnerships, teaching materials, tracking learning, teacher training and child safety. They are given a 1 to 4 star rating based on these areas. Now since this is a pilot project and it is voluntary, there may not be a lot of participants at this time. That doesn't mean that they are not a good program. They are simply not participating in the pilot. Also, just because a provider might have a rating of 1, for instance, again that does not mean they are a poor program. It does mean that they are working to improve their quality. You can feel free to ask the provider if they are participating in Parent Aware or if they have plans to participate. Since children can spend a lot of time in childcare settings, it is important that programs build their quality. It is important that children are safe, healthy and getting the steps needed to be sure they are ready for school.

Child care can be expensive. For instance, the average “infant” (or age appropriate to search) rate in “_____ County” is \$121 for Family Child Care providers and about \$165 for infants (or age appropriate to search) in centers. There are ways that you can offset those expenses. There are programs that may be able to help pay for child care such as child care assistance, dependent care assistance, Head Start and School Readiness Connections. Also some programs offer multi child discounts or you can check with your employer. They might offer assistance or you can participate in a Flexible Spending Account where funds are taken out pre-tax. There are also tax credits available to all working families that could be used toward child care expenses. There may be additional programs that you are eligible for that could help you with other expenses, freeing up some of you income for child care expenses. (Give examples: WIC, Section 8 Housing, Bridge to Benefits)

There are many quality indicators that we feel are important when you are looking for child care. Look at the health and safety of the children. For instance, are medicines, cleaning supplies and poisonous materials kept out of the reach of children? Do they practice good hand washing? Are the premises clean, picked up? Are changing surfaces disinfected? Are first aid kits readily available?

Also look at the group size and the adult to child ratio. Depending on the license, most family child care provider can have 1 to 3 “infants” in their care at any one time. (or children under the age of two years old) A center must maintain at least a 4 to 1 ratio in their infant room. The size of the group is also important. Make sure the children are getting the attention they need. Basically the smaller the group and the smaller the adult to child ratio, the more attention your child is going to get.

Look at the staff education and turnover or in the case of a family child care provider, what is her level of education? Does she take quality trainings and go beyond the minimum requirements for training. Basically, the better the provider is trained and turnover is kept low, it shows that the provider is dedicated to their profession and the well being of their employees also.

Watch how the provider interacts with the child. Do they get down on their level? Do they offer lots of one on one attention with each child?

Find out if the center is accredited. This shows their commitment to achieving and maintaining good quality in their programs. (Explain how & who and a bit of the process)

And lastly, discuss the curriculum that is used by the provider. Not all curriculums are created equal. Is it done on a regular basis? Is it age appropriate? Do they go beyond numbers and letters? Is there an assessment practiced along with the lessons? Can they track if the child is developing at a rate that is appropriate for their age group? Make sure that you select one with a program that you feel comfortable with.

Once I compile the list for you, how would you like me to get that out to you? I will mail it, but also can email it, fax it or you can stop by and pick it up (if that works for you)? Which would work best for you? I will also send out to you a parent packet that will give you additional information, as well as all the information I have given you over the phone. For instance, there is a brochure called “Is this the right place for my child”. That will give you several questions that you can ask the provider when you are interviewing with them. There is also a brochure that will give you a wealth of information. When you first open it up, the first thing you’ll see is those licensing phone numbers I was talking about. So you can call licensing to see if there have been any negative actions or complaints against the provider. I

again would encourage you to compare at least three child care programs and contact licensing before you leave your child in care. There are average rates by county and age group, early childhood education programs. And a list of quality websites you can visit if you ever have general questions or want to look something up.

We covered a lot of information. Do you have any questions about your next steps? I encourage you to contact the caregivers by phone as soon as possible. Confirm that they still have the vacancy you need and schedule a visit to compare at least three of the available options. After you have visited, call the parent references they have given you and contact the county licensing department to check the status of your potential caregivers' license. Complete all the necessary paperwork that the caregiver provides and start to prepare your child for the transition to care.

Appendix 4

Survey 1

- 1) The child care program my child attends:
 - a. Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.
 - b. Makes a difference in my child's well-being.
 - c. Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.Why?
- 2) The best thing for children is:
 - a. To be at home with a parent as much as possible.
 - b. To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside them home) whom they trust and love.
- 3) If I did not need child care to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
- 4) I think good child care is:
 - a. Easy to find
 - b. Hard to find
- 5) Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job caring for children.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
- 6) I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:
 - a. Excessive
 - b. Just right
 - c. Not strong enough

- 7) I feel comfortable asking my child care provider any question regarding my child's well-being:
- a. Agree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Strongly disagree
- Why or why not?

Appendix 5

Survey 1a: follow up survey

- 9) What are the ratings for child care programs called?
- 10) What do you think children gain when they trust and love their child care providers? Please provide 2-3 answers.
- 11) Why is it a problem for children to receive care from many different adults throughout the day in child care?
- 12) What is one important question to ask about a provider's education?
- 13) In what ways does child care help your child learn and grow?

Appendix 6

Acceptable Answers: Survey 1A

Answers that explicitly tie back to the ideas contained child care consult content were accepted as correct and the following scoring key way used. Only Question 9 required exact wording: answers that captured the ideas below without using the exact phrasing here were accepted for Questions 10-12.

Question 9: Parent Aware, Parent Aware Star Ratings, Parent Aware Star Programs

Question 10: Sense of security, trust in relationships that carries forward, a trusting environment is a learning environment

Question 11: Consistency of relationships is key to building strong relationships and taking comfort in them



Question 12: Demonstrated commitment to ongoing learning, regular training; child development; safety training; training related to my child's specific needs

Question 13: School readiness, social emotional growth



Appendix 7
Survey Results, Group 1

Pre-Service,
Completion 1

2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:



		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		0.0%	0
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		20.0%	2
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		80.0%	8
	Why?		7
	answered question		10
	skipped question		0

3. The best thing for children is:




		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		20.0%	2
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		80.0%	8
	answered question		10
	skipped question		0

Group 1,
Pre-Service, Completion 1

4. I think good child care is:




		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		0.0%	0
Hard to find		80.0%	8
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0

5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:




		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		0.0%	0
Just right		20.0%	2
Not strong enough		10.0%	1
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		70.0%	7
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Group 1,
Pre-Service, Completion 1

6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.





		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		50.0%	5
Disagree		30.0%	3
Strongly disagree		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0

7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		40.0%	4
Disagree		30.0%	3
Strongly disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		30.0%	3
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Group 1,
Pre-Service, Completion 1



8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		60.0%	6
Agree		20.0%	2
Disagree		10.0%	1
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		10.0%	1
Why or why not?			7
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Survey Results, Group 1

Post-Media Exposure, Completion 2


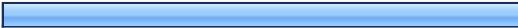
2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		0.0%	0
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		11.1%	1
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		88.9%	8
		Why?	8
	answered question		9
	skipped question		0

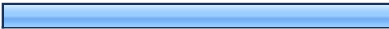

Group 1

Post-Media Exposure, Completion 2

3. The best thing for children is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		11.1%	1
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		88.9%	8
answered question			9
skipped question			0



4. I think good child care is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		0.0%	0
Hard to find		66.7%	6
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		33.3%	3
answered question			9
skipped question			0



Group 1

Post-Media Exposure, Completion 2

5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		0.0%	0
Just right		11.1%	1
Not strong enough		88.9%	8
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		0.0%	0
answered question			9
skipped question			0




6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		33.3%	3
Disagree		66.7%	6
Strongly disagree		0.0%	0
answered question			9
skipped question			0




Group 1

Post-Media Exposure, Completion 2




7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		44.4%	4
Disagree		33.3%	3
Strongly disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		22.2%	2
answered question			9
skipped question			0

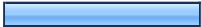
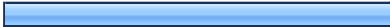
8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:




		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		66.7%	6
Agree		22.2%	2
Disagree		11.1%	1
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		0.0%	0
Why or why not?			7
answered question			9
skipped question			0

Survey Results, Group 1
Post-Service, Completion 3

2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		11.1%	1
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		11.1%	1
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		77.8%	7
		Why?	6
answered question			9
skipped question			0

Group 1,
Post-Service, Completion 3

3. The best thing for children is:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		33.3%	3
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		66.7%	6
answered question			9
skipped question			0

4. I think good child care is:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		11.1%	1
Hard to find		77.8%	7
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		11.1%	1
answered question			9
skipped question			0

Group 1,
Post-Service, Completion 3

5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		0.0%	0
Just right		11.1%	1
Not strong enough		77.8%	7
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		11.1%	1
answered question			9
skipped question			0





6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		11.1%	1
Agree		33.3%	3
Disagree		44.4%	4
Strongly disagree		11.1%	1
answered question			9
skipped question			0



Group 1

Post-Service, Completion 3

7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		44.4%	4
Disagree		22.2%	2
Strongly disagree		11.1%	1
Unsure		22.2%	2
answered question			9
skipped question			0

8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		55.6%	5
Agree		44.4%	4
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		0.0%	0
Why or why not?			6
answered question			9
skipped question			0

Group 1

Post-Service, Completion 3

Page 4, Q9. What are the Ratings for child care programs called?

1	Parent Aware
2	Parent Aware
3	I am not sure what this question means. I have called roughly 5 providers and so far, there are a couple that I will interview. I am looking for someone who cares about the well-being of my child and runs their daycare both professionally and lovingly.
4	MN Parent Aware
5	Can't remember
6	Parent Aware
7	Nationally accredited.
8	Parent Aware
9	im unsure.

Page 4, Q10. What do you think children gain when they trust and love their child care providers?

Please provide 2-3 answers.

1	a strong sense of self security space to learn
2	a bigger loving network and better transition to school and other group interactions
3	a sense of self worth and ability to be themselves while learning and growing.
4	I think that they are more comfortable and can then learn better - there is more consistence.
5	Confidence, sense of belonging and self-identity
6	Sense of security, feeling of welcomness.
7	Social skills education love.
8	Sense of security. Trust. Ability to open up.
9	great social skills and other skills and comfort from others outside of the home.

Group 1

Post-Service, Completion 3

Page 4, Q11. Why is it a problem for children to receive care from many different adults throughout the day in child care?

1	to much change is hard on kids
2	I've been told and truly believe that some sort of schedule and consistency is beneficial
3	children need routine and to feel they have people in their lives that are constant.
4	I feel like the passing around of a child doesn't help build trust, consistence or comfort.
5	No secure attachment formed
6	They don't get a chance to connect with an individual one on one.
7	Consistency is important but so is variety. I like center where my son learns to respect and obey adults and where there are many sets of eyes.
8	Children do not have the sense of security or trust; they may feel abandoned.
9	they have no sense of security knowing what to expect next in their day.

Page 4, Q12. What is one important question to ask about a provider's education?

1	do you know how to care for my child with special needs
2	what have been your continuing education forums, timing, etc.?
3	how educated they are in topics like first aid and CPR
4	If they are licensed & where they received their education.
5	Do you have education in child development
6	Why they decided to go into childcare.
7	How it can relate and be implemented to my son.
8	That they have specific education in childcare.
9	how long they have been doing this.



Page 4, Q13. In what ways does child care help your child learn and grow?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | child care is as important as our time at home. this is an important partnership in learning |
| 2 | gets use to group settings, social interaction |
| 3 | exposure to other kids (social development), sharing, independence, exposure to other opinions/cultures |
| 4 | I think the socialization with peers or a group of like aged children is helpful. |
| 5 | Helps socializing with peer group and learn attachment to other people |
| 6 | At home teaching programs can give your child an early start on their education. |
| 7 | He plays with kids learning social skills creativity diversity and respect. |
| 8 | Child care provides a different type of socialization. Children learn to trust and interact with individuals outside the home. |
| 9 | improving skills. |
-



Survey Results, Group 2

Pre-Service, Completion 1

2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		0.0%	0
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		18.2%	2
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		81.8%	9
	Why?		10
	answered question		11
	skipped question		0

3. The best thing for children is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		45.5%	5
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		54.5%	6
	answered question		11
	skipped question		0





Group 2,
Pre-Service, Completion 1

4. I think good child care is:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		0.0%	0
Hard to find		72.7%	8
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		27.3%	3
answered question			11
skipped question			0





5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		0.0%	0
Just right		45.5%	5
Not strong enough		9.1%	1
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		45.5%	5
answered question			11
skipped question			0

Group 2,
Pre-Service, Completion 1

6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.





		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		9.1%	1
Agree		18.2%	2
Disagree		45.5%	5
Strongly disagree		27.3%	3
answered question			11
skipped question			0

7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		45.5%	5
Disagree		9.1%	1
Strongly disagree		9.1%	1
Unsure		36.4%	4
answered question			11
skipped question			0

Group 2,
Pre-Service, Completion 1



8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		72.7%	8
Agree		9.1%	1
Disagree		9.1%	1
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		9.1%	1
	Why or why not?		10
	answered question		11
	skipped question		0

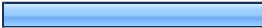

Survey Results, Group 2

Post-Media Exposure, Completion 2

2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		0.0%	0
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		11.1%	1
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		88.9%	8
		Why?	8
	answered question		9
	skipped question		0

3. The best thing for children is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		44.4%	4
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		55.6%	5
	answered question		9
	skipped question		0

Group 2

Post-Media Exposure, Completion 2

4. I think good child care is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		0.0%	0
Hard to find		77.8%	7
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		22.2%	2
answered question			9
skipped question			0





5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		0.0%	0
Just right		44.4%	4
Not strong enough		44.4%	4
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		11.1%	1
answered question			9
skipped question			0




Group 2

Post-Media Exposure, Completion 2

6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		11.1%	1
Agree		11.1%	1
Disagree		44.4%	4
Strongly disagree		33.3%	3
answered question			9
skipped question			0




7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		44.4%	4
Disagree		44.4%	4
Strongly disagree		11.1%	1
Unsure		0.0%	0
answered question			9
skipped question			0

Group 2

Post-Media Exposure, Completion 2



8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		77.8%	7
Agree		11.1%	1
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		11.1%	1
Why or why not?			8
answered question			9
skipped question			0

Survey Results, Group 2



Post-Service, Completion 3



2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		0.0%	0
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		11.1%	1
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		88.9%	8
		Why?	6
	answered question		9
	skipped question		0

Group 2

Post-Service, Completion 3




3. The best thing for children is:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		22.2%	2
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		77.8%	7
answered question			9
skipped question			0

4. I think good child care is:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		0.0%	0
Hard to find		77.8%	7
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		22.2%	2
answered question			9
skipped question			0




Group 2

Post-Service, Completion 3

5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		0.0%	0
Just right		66.7%	6
Not strong enough		22.2%	2
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		11.1%	1
answered question			9
skipped question			0




6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		33.3%	3
Disagree		22.2%	2
Strongly disagree		44.4%	4
answered question			9
skipped question			0



Group 2

Post-Service, Completion 3

7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		66.7%	6
Disagree		22.2%	2
Strongly disagree		11.1%	1
Unsure		0.0%	0
answered question			9
skipped question			0

8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		44.4%	4
Agree		55.6%	5
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		0.0%	0
Why or why not?			5
answered question			9
skipped question			0

Group 2

Post-Service, Completion 3

Page 4, Q9. What are the Ratings for child care programs called?

1	Parent Aware
2	Parent Awareness one to four star rating
3	referrals
4	rating scale
5	I am not sure.
6	Quality Rating
7	im unsure.
8	The Parent Aware rating? Or something with stars maybe?? I am not really sure.

Page 4, Q10. What do you think children gain when they trust and love their child care providers?**Please provide 2-3 answers.**

1	learning relationships love
2	Children gain positive relationship. Children will feel safe and welcomed. Children will feel secure.
3	Trust, loyalty, comfort
4	They can feel safe around them. They can also feel like they have other people they can count on to take care of them. They can also gain other learning skills.
5	1. A respect for adults who are not their parents, aunts, uncles, or grandparents. 2. A feeling of having an additional support system.
6	They learn they can trust adults. They gain a stable enviornment where they can grow.
7	great social skills and other skills and comfort from others outside of the home.
8	Confidence Trust in adults More outgoing personality

Group 2

Post-Service, Completion 3

Page 4, Q11. Why is it a problem for children to receive care from many different adults throughout the day in child care?

1	lack of trust
2	Sometimes they become insecure on who will care for them, they might not feel safe or build a good relationship.
3	They do not establish healthy relationships and a sense of routine.
4	I think it's a problem because then they can get confused and then they'll feel like people are just going in and out of their lives and it's not healthy for them.
5	Each person will have different ideas of how to teach children how to behave, act, and speak. They may get confused on which is the way they should actually be.
6	Children need a stable adult to trust and care after them instead of being passed off - also having a main adult caring for them, they will know what is best for your baby and get the best care.
7	they have no sense of security knowing what to expect next in their day.
8	There is little consistency and one adult might think another adult has already taken care of the child.




Page 4, Q12. What is one important question to ask about a provider's education?

1	CPR and first aid
2	How much training have they had with child care. What training courses do they know.
3	Do they provide some sort of curriculum for the child.
4	What experience they have with child care? I'd also ask what is their highest education?
5	If you received a college degree, was your major relevant to childhood education or childhood development?
6	How much experience they have
7	how long they have been doing this.
8	What is the highest level and are they licensed and do they still take classes.



Survey Results, Group 3

Pre-Service, Completion 1






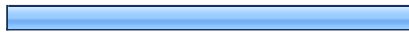
2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		10.0%	1
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		20.0%	2
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		70.0%	7
		Why?	1
answered question			10
skipped question			0

3. The best thing for children is:



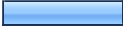
		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		30.0%	3
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		70.0%	7
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Group 3,
Pre-Service, Completion 1




4. I think good child care is:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		10.0%	1
Hard to find		70.0%	7
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0
5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		10.0%	1
Just right		20.0%	2
Not strong enough		0.0%	0
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		70.0%	7
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Group 3,
Pre-Service, Completion 1

6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.





		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		60.0%	6
Disagree		20.0%	2
Strongly disagree		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0

7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		70.0%	7
Disagree		10.0%	1
Strongly disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Group 3,
Pre-Service, Completion 1




8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		50.0%	5
Agree		30.0%	3
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree		10.0%	1
Unsure		10.0%	1
	Why or why not?		0
	answered question		10
	skipped question		0

Survey Results, Group 3

Post-Service, Completion 2



2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		10.0%	1
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		20.0%	2
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		70.0%	7
		Why?	1
answered question			10
skipped question			0




Group 3

Post-Service, Completion 2

3. The best thing for children is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		30.0%	3
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		70.0%	7
answered question			10
skipped question			0


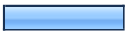

4. I think good child care is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		10.0%	1
Hard to find		70.0%	7
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0





Group 3

Post-Service, Completion 2

5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		10.0%	1
Just right		0.0%	0
Not strong enough		20.0%	2
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		70.0%	7
answered question			10
skipped question			0




6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		11.1%	1
Agree		55.6%	5
Disagree		11.1%	1
Strongly disagree		22.2%	2
answered question			9
skipped question			1





Group 3

Post-Service, Completion 2

7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		40.0%	4
Disagree		30.0%	3
Strongly disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		30.0%	3
answered question			10
skipped question			0

8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		40.0%	4
Agree		30.0%	3
Disagree		20.0%	2
Strongly Disagree		0.0%	0
Unsure		10.0%	1
Why or why not?			0
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Group 3

Post-Service, Completion 2

Page 4, Q9. What are the Ratings for child care programs called?

1	Star Ratings
2	parent Aware
3	Parent Aware
4	Parent Aware Star Ratings!
5	Parent Aware
6	Parent Aware
7	Star Programs
8	Parent Aware
9	Parent Aware
10	Can't remember

Page 4, Q10. What do you think children gain when they trust and love their child care providers?**Please provide 2-3 answers.**

1	Unsure
2	Can't recall
3	lots of things
4	They learn to trust adults they are comfortable enough to learn they feel secure

Group 3

Post-Service, Completion 2

Page 4, Q11. Why is it a problem for children to receive care from many different adults throughout the day in child care?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | this is a problem because kids feel challenges to create strong relationships with so many different people and this stresses them |
| 2 | they need to create a friendship with a few important people they know well. they can't create these types of relationships with dozens of caregivers. |
| 3 | children depend upon a strong relationship with a core group of adults. I learned this from your child care counselor. |
| 4 | they become wary of people and insecure about their surroundings. It also increases the chances that someone will get hurt or abused |
| 5 | Is this true? |
| 6 | ? |
| 7 | ? |

Page 4, Q12. What is one important question to ask about a provider's education?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Safety training |
| 2 | it is very important to be sure they have training on teaching such as activity planning and such |
| 3 | they need to have safety training in case a child chokes or becomes injured |
| 4 | ask about child development training and lesson planning |
| 5 | Training in child development, kids growth |
| 6 | You should ask if they have training in how to track children's learning. The lady said this is important for kindergarten. |
| 7 | Do they have safety training |

Group 3

Post-Service, Completion 2




Page 4, Q13. In what ways does child care help your child learn and grow?

1	it prepares them for school and allows them to learn in teh important early years.
2	It prepares them for school and teaches them to trust the world
3	i learned that quality child care lasts a lifetime. it is the foundation for my son't learning to come
4	?
5	?

Survey Results, Group 4

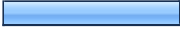

Pre-Service, Completion 1

2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:




		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		10.0%	1
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		20.0%	2
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		70.0%	7
		Why?	0
		answered question	10
		skipped question	0

Group 4,
Pre-Service, Completion 1

3. The best thing for children is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		30.0%	3
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		70.0%	7
answered question			10
skipped question			0

4. I think good child care is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		10.0%	1
Hard to find		70.0%	7
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Group 4,
Pre-Service, Completion 1

5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:





		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		0.0%	0
Just right		30.0%	3
Not strong enough		10.0%	1
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		60.0%	6
answered question			10
skipped question			0

6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.




		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		50.0%	5
Disagree		40.0%	4
Strongly disagree		10.0%	1
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Group 4,
Pre-Service, Completion 1

7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		40.0%	4
Disagree		30.0%	3
Strongly disagree		10.0%	1
Unsure		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0



8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		70.0%	7
Agree		20.0%	2
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree		10.0%	1
Unsure		0.0%	0
Why or why not?			0
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Survey Results, Group 4

Post-Service, Completion 2



2. In my opinion, the child care program my child attends or will attend:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Does not make a difference in my child's well-being.		0.0%	0
Makes a difference in my child's well-being.		20.0%	2
Makes a big difference in my child's well-being.		80.0%	8

Why? 1

answered question	10
skipped question	0







3. The best thing for children is:

		Response Percent	Response Count
To be at home with a parent as much as possible.		20.0%	2
To spend their time with several adults (inside and outside the home) whom they trust and love.		80.0%	8

answered question	10
skipped question	0

Group 4




Post-Service, Completion 2

4. I think good child care is:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Easy to find		30.0%	3
Hard to find		60.0%	6
Neither, I am unsure whether child care will be easy or hard to find.		10.0%	1
answered question			10
skipped question			0
5. I think the rules and laws in place to make sure child care is safe are:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Excessive		0.0%	0
Just right		20.0%	2
Not strong enough		20.0%	2
None of these. I am unsure about the child care rules in place.		60.0%	6
answered question			10
skipped question			0





Group 4

Post-Service, Completion 2

6. If I did not need child care in order to work, I would still use it regularly for other reasons.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		30.0%	3
Disagree		50.0%	5
Strongly disagree		20.0%	2
answered question			10
skipped question			0




7. Most child care providers can be trusted to do a good job of caring for children.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		0.0%	0
Agree		44.4%	4
Disagree		22.2%	2
Strongly disagree		22.2%	2
Unsure		11.1%	1
answered question			9
skipped question			1

Group 4

Post-Service, Completion 2

8. I would feel comfortable asking a child care provider any question that is on my mind regarding my child's well-being:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		70.0%	7
Agree		20.0%	2
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree		10.0%	1
Unsure		0.0%	0
Why or why not?			3
answered question			10
skipped question			0

Page 4, Q9. What are the Ratings for child care programs called?

1	Parent Aware or Parent Beware
2	Parent Aware Stars
3	Parent Aware
4	Parent Aware Stars
5	Parent Aware Ratings
6	Star Parents
7	Parent Aware Stars
8	Star Watch
9	Parent Aware
10	Parent Aware, Star System

Group 4

Post-Service, Completion 2

Page 4, Q10. What do you think children gain when they trust and love their child care providers?

Please provide 2-3 answers.

1	they can have a sense of their own culture they can developing the learning they need for school they can be cared for in a group of babies, that's good
2	They trust me to bring them to a good place they gain a sense of independence from mom and dad they gain lots of education from this professional teacher and caregiver
3	they remain safe in their care they have fun
4	they gain a sense of loyalty
5	?
6	Many good things, not sure which to highlight
7	they are ready to learn
8	they benefit because they develop depend on good relationships to learn that the world is a safe place to explore and this is how they learn. Once they're learning, they're on track for school and success.
9	Not sure
10	they gain a strong sense of security and self esteem

Group 4

Post-Service, Completion 2

Page 4, Q11. Why is it a problem for children to receive care from many different adults throughout the day in child care?

1	In my country this was considered a bad idea because it is confusing when the child has to live under many persons rules, they might be different
2	not sure, but it seems like a bad idea my gut says it's wrong
3	it is too inconsistent
4	I remember this one. It is a problem b/c children depend on steady relationships and too much change can prevent them from creating good relationships at child care. this really matters because they are just learning how to create relationships
5	because this takes away from the stability and the children can not know what to expect
6	Not sure
7	too many germs?

Page 4, Q12. What is one important question to ask about a provider's education?

1	can they help my child learn english and speak his own language
2	Are they trained to put infants down for a nap safely
3	what education they have that will help them care for my child
4	?
5	It is important to ask if they have training in health and safety and helping children learn to love reading and language
6	Whether or not they have training specific to caring for children like mine (an infant with hearing loss). This will require some very specific knowledge.
7	what their degree is in?

Group 4

Post-Service, Completion 2

Page 4, Q13. In what ways does child care help your child learn and grow?	
1	they are safe and they learn
2	it teaches discipline
3	every way
4	It helps prepare them for school/ it offers time to interact with other children and become part of a group
5	Child care helps my children get ready for kindergarten and this is important because it sets the stage for learning to come and impacts self esteem

Appendix 8**In-Depth Parent Interview Transcripts**

Interview 1: Ted, father of Rosie, age 12 and Benjamin, age 10

10/25/2011

EC: Thank you very much for your time. Feel free to help yourself to snacks. As I mentioned on the phone, I am interested in learning about families' experiences in child care. There are no wrong answers or ideas here, I am just interested in hearing what child care has meant for you and your children.

Interview 1(I1): OK. And I should. As I said to you, I have not put my children in child care and they're almost grown. We've worked really hard and given up lots so that they can be with us. I am proud of that. I just, I...I would never trust some daycare provider with my child. I would have no idea if their days would be aimless and lonely and that's no way to grow up.

EC: Tell me about your pictures here.

I1: I cut this out of one of my wife's magazines when I went looking for images about daycare. It is some sort of medicine or, I mean treatment for lice. It made me think of how unclean some daycares are with all those children crammed in there. I think it's a lot of work to take care of two kids and sometimes we have three when my nephew stays with us. The people who do this are likely to be really overworked and stressed out and, who wants that type of person with their children? I don't. I am not sure what else to say about this one.

EC: That's fine, you can move on to the next one if nothing else comes to mind.

I1: Just that my kids have never had lice yet. Not one time. And they don't get those, um, ear infections all the time either.

EC: That's a big help.

I1: Ok, it might seem weird but I also brought this lawn ad, it's not a lawn ad but you know it's like a before and after, for a weed killer. It shows how nasty a yard can be when you don't take care of it and it reminded me of what I think daycare is like for too many kids who come from the poor parts of town. I mean what do you guys tell parents to do when the daycares in their areas are all crap?

EC: That's hard, really hard.

I1: I also brought this Fruit Loops ad because I remember eating cereal out of a box when I went to daycare. Myself, I mean. I would get there hungry and sometimes we'd eat but usually I'd have to wait until lunch and I'd be really hungry. You know, when kids are growing they need to eat really regularly. It gives them a desperate kind of feeling when they don't have what they need.

Next, I brought this news story on a daycare mom who just locked the kids in the shed in Wisconsin. She just got tired of taking care of them and locked them up. How do you like that? She was caught but how

many daycare moms do things a little less serious, or even more and don't get caught? I don't know. I don't mean to disrespect those who do well but how do you really spot the bad apples?

I clipped this coupon for a new parenting book on discipline because I think the whole time out craze is a little out of control and I know daycares overuse punishments that get the kids out of their face for just a minute or two. I've heard about. A mom in the neighborhood told me that the teachers, teachers because you know she goes to a center, ah, program, they, get real wrung out and just send the kids to time out because they're to the breaking point, you know? That can't be good for the kids. It really struck me when this mom said that.

The next two are pictures of happy kids. I imagine my kids' experiences at home have been more like this. This one, this kid swinging, that kid looks happy, clean and well cared for.

EC: Are there any images you thought of, that are a part of the child care story for you that you could not find?

I1: No, not, not that I can think of.

EC: Can you arrange these images for me? What I mean are some connected, or some more important than others?

Sure, I think the happy kids go together, these two pictures of kids at home and happy. The picture of the time out kids goes with the lice treatment and the Fruit Loops and, all the others because they're all about kids not really getting what they need or many being put at risk. The kids on punishment, the crappy yard and the Fruit Loops ads all look like different parts of a kids' day in daycare.

EC: Thanks. Is there one image that is most important to your story?

I1: Yeah, I guess the one of the yard cause it reminds me so much of begin a kid in child care.

EC: What does it remind you of?

I1: Well. We were just dropped off and left there. There are hard, metal edges to everything. See how unsafe that fence looks? I remember forgetting my jacket one cold day and playing outside without it. I remember learning how to swear that day.

EC: What's happening outside what we can see of this picture?

What do you mean, like, in what I am remembering?

EC: Right.

There's a swing set with sharp, broken pieces to the slide. Metal trucks sticking up out of the dirt that can trip you if you try to run and play. There are no adults anywhere. No one knows what the rules are or who will enforce them. I also think the cereal commercial is as big a deal for me. I remember some really third world-type stuff in child care. I remember fighting other kids for cereal.

EC: What image captures the exact opposite of what you described here?

I1: Well, like I said, the happy kid swinging, that's about as different as night and day.

EC: This next question might sound a bit odd, but I've heard what child care looks like to you, can you explain what it tastes, feels, smells or sounds like?

If you are brave enough (laughing) to ask that weird question, I am brave enough to answer it. Ummm, I want to think about that for a minute.

EC: Sure.

I1: Child care feels like a scary movie you're too young to see. It tastes like sugary cereal you're not allowed to have at home.

EC: Anything else?

I1: That's plenty right? (laughing)

EC: Sure. Ok now, I want to be sure the main ideas I take away from your story are the right ones. I heard you say that child care outside of the family involves a lot of loneliness and uncertainty, not knowing how well your kids would be cared for. That this uncertainty relates to what you know about child care.

I1: Yes, that's about it.

Interview 2: Shareen, mother of Ruby, age 6 and Rose, age 7

10/26/2011

EC: Thanks very much for getting together with me. Help yourself to coffee or cheese and crackers. I see you brought some of clippings and pictures as we chatted about, that's great. I am interested in your child care story so there are no right or wrong answers or ideas. Just your thoughts and memories.

Would you like to tell me about your photos?

Interviewee 2 (I2): O.K. I, well. I get a little emotional thinking about all this, sorry.

EC: That's no problem. I understand.

I2: It's just that I have felt so helpless at certain times in my kids' lives and when you asked me to think about the whole story, it really brought this to mind, brought this up for me. There's nothing worse. But, you asked about my photos and I'll share them in order.

First, this is my husband with my older daughter and they're reading a big stack of books. Until my girls were toddlers, they were home with their dad and I really think this was wonderful. This one is special because it shows what I saw each day as I was leaving for work, the two of them diving into a pile of books. I knew their days would be mellow and comfortable and this really allowed me to go to work feeling calm and, and proud really, that we were able to give her these experiences. When our second daughter arrived she stayed home with her dad for a while too but not for as long as Rosie. Still that time with their dad has led to a really special relationship. I keep using that word, "special" ...how corny.

O.k. so. Where was I? At the beginning still. The girls' child care began with their dad and I noticed that the next three, what did you call them "clippings?" I brought are about why I am so thankful for this. Not that there's anything wrong with child care, it's just that I wanted my kids to be home when it was cold out and not have to worry if they were sick. So, I guess these ads show ways in which my experiences were different from my kids and show that we were very intentional about this. My girls were not bundled up on cold mornings and sent over to neighbors' houses or to child care. They were not moved around all the time. They slept when they wanted to and had a very small world to start with. I think that's how it should be when they're tiny. They had comfort and security. I was reminded of this by this Tylenol ad, the little boy looks so cozy and comfortable in his own bed. Next, this ad for...something...shows these blond girls (just like mine) watching the snow fall from inside a warm house. They look happy and comfortable kinda like they know they're in their place in the world. Do you know what I mean? They have a little space in the world carved out just for them. And this Hamburger Helper ad shows this family gathered around the table with each other for lunch, at least it looks like lunch to me. This reflects the at home routine that my kids had early on. Not that I would feed my kids that crap (laughing). I had this idea that these kids had been home all day, maybe playing in the yard but not going much farther than this. I can't really tell you why, but I loved that I knew what they were doing during the day while I was away just looking at my watch. It's harder when you aren't sure what they're doing or really who they're with. It seems like, I just I've always felt a little bit like. Sorry, this is the sad part for me...that knowing these things, what they're up to and who is taking care of them every minute is part of being a good mom. I haven't always been able to know these things. By the time we got them into daycare centers it seemed like there would be different people all the time. Sometimes I did not know the names of the girls in the room when I showed up for pick up. I don't think I've told anyone that before but you won't judge me, I am just a crying basket-case who doesn't know the names of all these

teachers (laughs). But do you see? It was like they were new people all the time and subs in for sick staff and these was tons of sickness.

Let me show you this one. This is my younger daughter Ruby at ten months. She has eczema and I think it was about her begin stresses out in child care. We couldn't find a program that could take both girls at one time and so she was kinda thrown out on her own. I don't think that was a bad place, exactly. This is a picture of a kid who's trying to smile but can't. I did not feel like I could drop in and check on her. She seemed stressed out and she would cry and cry when I left. I wondered if she was crying all day. She developed eczema, I always thought from the stress of this change. Another mom told me her baby never adjusted to this daycare and never bonded or connected with the daycare staff. Did I tell you? When all this was going on I read about sexual abuse at a home daycare. Can you imagine, those tiny kids? I was happy to get her out of there and into the program with her sister. I felt like they could look out for each other and the older one could let me know what was going on. "Here's my last one, of happy kids playing in a daycare classroom, this is really where we've ended up.

EC: Can you choose one image and tell me what's happening beyond the parts we can't see?

I2: Sure, uh. o.k. this one again. I think there are perfectly organized cabinets next to these kids working at the table. It's a little strange how tidy this place was considering it was full of little kids. One of the moms said that was good marketing for the parents to keep it this way but less happy for the little kids.

EC: Are there any images you thought of, that are missing, that you could not find?

I2: Nope, this tells the whole story.

EC: Great. Is there one image that is most important to your story?

I2: Probably this last one showing the happy kids together. My girls have been together at the same child care program for the last few years now. Ruby did not cry at our new place, even the first day. It was quiet and calm and peaceful and there was a huge playground out back. I dropped them off and then cried in the car because the worst chapter in my life as a parent was all over.

EC: What image would be the opposite of this one you selected as the most important?

I2: Well I guess, I just imagine those kids that were sexually abused in care that was in the news a while back. That's every parent's worst fear right? You're at work going to meetings, taking a lunch break whatever and your child's being victimized.

EC: Sure, yes, I hear you. This next question might seem a little different than the others but how would you describe child care using the other senses?

I2: What?

EC: What I mean is, we've talked a lot about the images that capture your child care story. If you close your eyes and think about the story what do you smell, feel, hear? Does that make sense?

I2: Oh, sure I got ya. Um. It feels like playtime. It smells like sand and baby shampoo. It sounds like babies babbling and learning to talk.

EC: Thanks, that's great. We're nearly done. I have noticed a few ideas that seem to sum up your story but I want to be sure I heard that story correctly. I think you shared that child care for you has been about a strong desire to know how your children are. The more information the better. When you don't know what's happening, you feel a bit at sea. Is that about it? Child care has been about separation, your child from one another and you, and also coming back together at the end of the day and, for the two of them, in child care.

I2: Yes, that's very well summed it. It's been therapeutic to talk about it. Now I am off to Target to do a little shopping (laughing).

Interview 3: Cassidy, Mother of Leo, 7, and Candace, 3

10/28/2011

EC: Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with me and for being flexible about the time.

Interviewee 3 (I3): No problem.

EC: I am really interested in your child care story. There are absolutely no wrong answers or ideas, it's all-

I3: I guess I am an expert on my own story, I see what you mean.

EC: Exactly, I just want to hear all about your story and your kids and what child care has meant to your family. I see you brought some pictures and magazine cut outs. Thanks for remembering, would you like to tell me about them?

I3: Ok, well I've been thinking about this a bit since we made this appointment and, you know how it is when you're looking for something and it's on your mind, suddenly every ad I saw and every photo I looked at at home, seemed to be about child care is some way, so I brought quite a few pictures.

EC: That's wonderful.

OK, so this ad showing a dad leaving for the day and waving to his family-um, it doesn't matter that it's for laundry detergent right, I didn't do this wrong?

EC: No, you did it exactly right.

I3: O.k. great, this guy leaving his family and waving goodbye, he looks happy and ready for the day and the kids look happy. There are no tears at this goodbye and that's a big part of my child care story. I cannot imagine leaving my kids somewhere they don't feel comfortable and I am so blessed I've never needed to do this. I say goodbye to them in the morning and I'll miss them a little bit but really, I know

they'll be doing great stuff. I'll be running around all day focused on work—just like this dad—because I know they're running around having a great old time. Their daycare mom plans better days for them than I ever could. I am lucky if I can get it together enough to plan one art project, craft, a month. She does this everyday with a bunch of kids. It's awesome. Maybe I am reading a lot into this guy's face and his kid's faces but that's what I see.

Next, I brought this picture from my kid's daycare. Ann, our daycare mom, sends pictures home every so often. You can see my little guy dancing with his little sister. You can see all the kids dancing in the living room and just having a good time. I think this is what it should be about. Kids who know their daycares well enough to have a good time to be silly and have fun. I think there would be lots of worry if they did not feel so at home. They feel at home at daycare, they have a second home.

I also have a picture of myself as a little kid. I remember loving daycare and the fact that I had my own cubby for my coat and my own Scooby-Doo coloring book at that was only mine. That was so great for me. I thought of these experiences when my kids were tiny and I was feeling so unsure.

This one, this ad of this baby sleeping, reminded me of when they were tiny and fragile. I worried then. Because I just wasn't sure what might happen. I might have worried more if we were all together though. I don't know a ton about infants, I mean, I know enough but I am not a professional. Anyway, I just used to wait until it was time to go pick them up when they were this small. I'd be so happy to see that they were O.K. and had a good day.

I also brought this page from the KARE 11 website because I have this really strong memory of watching the T.V. news while getting my kids ready for daycare and hearing this story about some evil bastard—can I use bad language here?—who had molested little girls in his wife's home day care. This made me

sick. I turned off the T.V. and wondered if the kids were listening or able to understand. What kind of world is this that we care so little about our kids that we allow this to happen? I don't blame anyone except the molester himself, and his wife, but I do wonder how it's so easy to get approval, or certified I guess to care for little kids. What does this say about our values, I wonder. I am far from the only parent who needs child care because I can't afford to be home with my kids.

O.K. that's a whole lot of standing on my soap box and more than you probably ever wanted to know about my family.

EC: No, that's all perfect. Are there any pieces of the story that you could not find a photo for?

I3: Let's see. I suppose I would have included something that really expressed the nice experience I had in child care but of course I don't have any photos of that. I think I maybe said enough about this, however.

EC: Great, sounds like we're set there. Can you think about which of these images belong together or which are most important to your story?

I3: Sure, like which ones are part of the same time period or idea?

EC: Exactly, well said.

I3: Well I think the KARE 11 and the baby sleeping go together because they're really about kids' fragility and I think parents know this dang well when they're leaving their kids in the hands of someone else.

Next, the happy photos all belong together. Me as a little kid, the dad leaving and my kids dancing together. They are all about the peacefulness of the right place.

EC: Can you say more about that peacefulness?

I3: Sure, I once knew a mom who stayed up all night for a few weeks just looking at her baby. She wanted to be sure he was O.K. you know physically and that he was getting enough love at daycare. She would just check him out while he slept and look for bruises or signs of nightmares. I am not kidding you. I said, "Joanie, I don't think you feel very good about your daycare situation. You've got to keep

looking.” I really felt for her and thank my lucky stars I’ve never once had that kind of doubt, so I guess that’s the opposite of what you asked but I’ve slept great since my kids were old enough to sleep through the night. Sometimes I think I am the exception.

EC: Can you please tell me which image is the most important to your story?

I3: I think the one I started with. The happy dad, he is really me and my husband leading the happy life because our kids are happy.

EC: What would be an image that captures the opposite of this one, the happy day?

I3: Well, I don’t have this image but Joanie hanging out over her baby’s crib sick with worry. That would be the opposite.

EC: Right. O.K. one more request. Can you tell me what child care sounds, feels, smells or tastes like?

I3: I think I know what you mean, but I’ve never eaten child care (laughing).

EC: Right, I hear you, but perhaps there’s a taste that really means something to your child care story.

I3: Child care...smells like a clean house, it sounds like kids playing and laughing in the yard...it feels like coming home at the end of a long day and seeing the most beautiful faces in the world...it tastes like peanut butter and apples. Is that last one weird?

EC: Not at all. I think I have a really strong sense of your child care story. Just one final question to be sure. I think your child care story really is about peace-of-mind that comes from knowing the kids are O.K. You feel free to work because you know they’re doing well. You trust your care provider and you trust child care because you know it can be good. Is that close?

I3: Yes, that’s spot on.

Interview 4: Jeremy, Father of Eli, 7 years old

October 28, 2011

EC: Thanks for the time. Help yourself to snacks. Before we dive in I want to be sure to say there’s no wrong answers here, what I really want to hear is your unique story.

I4: No problem, thank you.

EC: Tell me about your photos.

I4: Sure, well I don't have as much to say as some other parents. I have really good child care for my son. This is a picture I cut out of one of my wife's magazines of kids sitting around a table having a snack and having a good time. This is the vibe of my kid's daycare when I drop him off and pick him up. The kids are just being kids and having a good old time. The teachers are there to guide them but not to control them if you know what I mean. Like the kids like to tell each other goofy stories over breakfast in the morning and nobody tells them to be more serious, or to knock it off or whatever. I think that's really important. These kids are a little messy and they just look like they're having fun and being goofy and I think that freedom is really important.

I also have a picture of these kids playing on the playground. They are free to waste time in the corner digging in the sand or learn the monkey bars or whatever they feel like. That looks like a good amount of structure to me and I like that about my son's current place. I don't know why people want their kids to grow up so fast. I think they can teach us how to relax and go with things better than we do in society in general. It always seems like we're in such a rush to force these good play habits out of them and turn them into little adults. So this picture made me stop and laugh a little but because that goofy kid is just hanging out on his own digging in the dirt and this kid is real focused on talking to other kids and this kid is just daydreaming looking off in the distance. That's cool that they are allowed the freedom to be themselves. I think this is one of the most mentionable things about my son's child care experiences. I am glad about this. It's funny, sometimes I get too serious about things and, you know, life is full of stuff to worry about and then I go to pick him up and the kids will be thinking about nothing except watching the snow fall and one of their teachers will be talking about all the different shapes of snowflakes she sees and asks if they'd like to make paper snowflakes and I think, O.K., I should calm down and enjoy life

a little bit.

I also brought in this image of kids sleeping—I think it's an ad for cold medicine or something—because I am so totally amazed that these child care people get these kids to lay down on these mats and go to sleep. It blows me away, my kid doesn't sleep easily for me and he will lay down on this cot, surrounded by his buddies and go to sleep. I am not totally sure, now that I am talking about it, how it relates to the child care story but the other parents and I always laugh about this. It's like they have some magic fairy dust or something.

[pause] I guess what it is, is this...the kids are comfortable and they don't have lots of conflict with the staff and so they're not always trying to exert their independence. They're just being themselves. They're free from all that grown-up, kid power struggle stuff. I am not always able to keep us free from that at home, but I am glad these teachers are professionals who really know their stuff. Like my kid wasn't able to rest well the first couple months he was there, you know, during naptime. He is not a kid who sleeps well and I told them they were just going to have to get used to him being the way he is and give him some books to read or something. The teachers said, fine for now, but he's really tired. I assumed they'd start punishing him for being awake and I was really getting ready to fight them. You know though, you know what they did do? They talked with him about how much they liked, liked, the fact that he was so excited about his days that he didn't want to miss anything. They talked about the fact that he was really a, I guess, a go getter of a kid. Next they talked about the fact that go getters, especially go getters need to rest their bodies. So check it out, now he's proud and feels like he's special and because of his, you know, superpowers, needs to take a rest. I kid you not. Isn't that totally genius?

I also have this picture of a tiny little kid sitting at this great big school desk. Sometimes I worry that he's not going to be ready for school, I keep hearing this is a big deal. But how can they help him get ready for school and still have time to, ya know, pick his nose (laughing) I mean just play around and mess

around and be a little kid. One time, he came home and he was real proud that he had learned his colors and I am glad about that. That's cool. But when he came home ready to talk with me about numbers and math, I thought, whoa. What the heck? Is someone showing my kid flashcards? How does this get in the way of his God-given freedom to be a kid?

But on the other hand, they say that kids who start behind stay behind. So this is a conflict in my mind that I haven't totally worked out. He, my kid that is, seems to have worked it out just fine though. He seems to think learning about math is the same as doing finger painting, which is the same as doing tag outside.

But, you know. Look at this next picture—I took this at our family reunion—these kids laughing, with their mouths wide open. I mean belly laughing. And they're all messy with ice cream on their faces and dirt on their arms and legs. I love that. That's freedom right there. I don't think these kids are learning multiplication tables but they're doing just what they need to be doing. These kids are not worried about instructions or anything like that. This shows that kids need freedom and someone watching out for them. Different places provide different levels of supervision. There should be freedom but within a structure. There is a balance between keeping them safe and letting them play. They need to be getting ready for the world. I struggle to know how to keep them safe so they trust the world but also give them freedom so they have independence and will try new things.

This last picture is my kid when he was really small. This one really matters to me the most because it reminds me how much we worried at first about daycare. It really took a lot of trial and error, change, change and more change for us to find a good, safe place. By then, by the time we found our current fantastic place, he was nearly ready for elementary school. I could always tell if he had had a good day or not when I picked him up. I always felt horrible for not knowing if he was having a bad day while I was at work and, if he'd had a great day and was smiling and happy, I would feel silly for all the worrying I

had been doing.

EC: Thanks, all really very interesting. Thanks for sharing these. Are there any important pieces of the story that you couldn't find a picture for?

I4: No...well. I guess I was picturing a little kid in a business suit when I was thinking about this ready for school stuff interfering with his playtime. The best I could find was this kid at a desk and it's not perfect because it's not that I hate school or have any problem with learning. I am not some nut. It's that I don't want them to be adults before their time. It's kind of an affliction, adulthood.

EC: How would you sort these pictures or categorize them as similar or different, related or unrelated?

I4: Well, I suppose there are all these current ones that show really good things, happy kids. Oh my gosh, I forgot to tell you that at my kids' current program they have a peace corner where the kids go to work out disagreements. Anyway. Then there's the one of my child as a little kid and the one of this kid at a great big desk. Those represent the worries I have and that I think lots of parents probably have. The other pictures represent freedom from all this draining worrying that I have found lately. I still worry about the forced learning issue but I know he's safe and o.k. and that means a lot.

EC: Would you please choose one of your pictures and tell me what's on either side of our view, what's happening that we can't see?

I4: Sure, I'll take the one of the kids napping here. I think what we can't see is the daycare teacher sitting right next to the kids while they sleep. It's so important to have someone looking out for them. I picture her like a heavy-set, middle aged lady. She's tired but she has really good intentions with these kids.

EC: Can I ask now, what does child care feel like when you think about all your senses?

I4: Oh, I like this? Ummm. It feels like letting go of a small hand. It smells like paste and grass and dirt

and juice.

EC: Wonderful, thank you again, your story is so helpful and filled with insights. I want to be sure that I have captured the right takeaways or themes from your story, so can I sum up and you let me know if I am off the mark or getting it about right?

I4: Sure.

EC: I noted that your story was focused on freedom. As in good child care gives kids the freedom to be kids and parents freedom from worry. Is that one of the important ideas?

I4: Well. That's almost it I think. It's more like, I want kids to have lots of unplanned time and I need to know he's O.K. to be able to do my work. I think we're on the same page.

Interview 5: Emily, mother of Erik, 2 years

10/23/2011

EC: Thanks so much for your time. Based on our scheduling conversation you are very busy and so I really appreciate you fitting this in. Before we get started I want to say, there are only two rules: have all the snacks you like and please keep in mind that there are no wrong answers or ideas here. I am looking for your child care story so no thought is too small and no idea is off base. If it is true to your story, I'd love to hear it. So, tell me about your photos.

I5: Sure, well this first one might seem a little crazy but, since you said there are no wrong answers I'll take it out—in all honesty, I was thinking about hiding this one.

EC: Believe me, nothing's crazy or wrong in your stack of pictures.

I5: Ok, here goes. This is an ad for a bladder control medicine for older ladies. I kept coming back to it as

I was looking for my child care story pictures, you know doing my homework. I just couldn't let the idea go that this one really mattered and captures what I'll always remember about our crazy ride, Erik and mine. It just so reminds me of the demands on my time as a single mom and, when I get home, When we finally get home together at the end of the day, sometimes I am so hungry to be with him or he needs so much from me, I don't go to the bathroom for an hour. That's how busy everything is. So really, this is about desperate but...really nice times. My needs are not always being met but I hope Erik's are. That's what it's like. I feel so focused on him when I get to be with him. I am afraid to leave him for a minute or do anything wrong. I am afraid to go pee.

This whole idea also reminds me of the best part of the day, when we're finally home together and I can know that he's O.k. I worry quite a bit during the day. I look him in the eye and wonder how he's doing. I hear about children being mistreated in care and I vow that that won't happen to him.

EC: What do you hear?

I5: Oh, I heard there was a big news story. I don't even follow news like that because it just freaks me out but I heard this from a mom at the park. There was some woman recently who looked the kids in a shed and, this all sounds so terrible, one who pinned the kids to the mattresses at naptime. I mean, come on. why are you in this profession if you hate little kids?

Next, I have a photo of a woman in great shape working out and another one of a successful professional. Child care is my ticket to making a living. If I know Erik is well cared for, I can go to work and make the money we need to keep us afloat. I feel conflict about leaving him at care a bit of extra time so that I can go work out and take care of myself. I am just not sure how he's doing, even though his caregiver is great, I am just not sure about taking that extra time.

I also have this lottery ticket because I have been playing the lottery to make finances easier. Child care

is expensive but a necessity for me as a single mom. It's expensive in terms of cash paid out but also in terms of my relationship with my son. I feel badly that he's in care and away from me as much as he is. I hope he's doing well. The longer my day goes on the more I feel like he might fall off a changing table or maybe getting left at the park accidentally. When I pick him up, he laughs and screams when he sees me and I know I am the center of his world and that he's O.K.

EC: How would you group these images? Are some connected or more important than others?

I5: Well, here's the chronic worry story. The bladder control ad and the lottery ticket show all I need from child care and why I need it to be good. I really need this. The rest are really just musings, I don't really need to work out the way that I need my child to be cared for really well and be me as much as possible.

EC: What's the most important of these images in terms of telling your story?

Here it is. The first day I left him at care after my short maternity leave. He was such a little peanut. Still so small and I sat in the car all the way to work wondering if Auntie Anna would be able to understand his needs the way I had learned to. Would she be able to anticipate what he needed and give it to him? I remember sitting in traffic and the light turned green and I continued to sit there and worry. I wondered what all the honking was about for a minute before I snapped out of it."

EC: What picture would tell the exact opposite of this story?

I5: Oh my gosh. A mom at home with her baby until he starts school. I see those kids dropped off at school by their moms in sweats. I think those moms are going to go home and do things focused on their family and then be right back where they started to pick up their kids at the end of the school day. I don't even know that I'd be a good stay-at-home mom or that I'd want that life, but it sure looks

appealing some days.

EC: What does child care smell, sound, taste and feel like?

I5: Child care feels like a nagging headache. It smells like files at work. It sounds like her son greeting her when she picks him up. It smells like cleaning products and French toast for breakfast.

EC: One last question. I have noticed some important ideas that came up a few times in your story. I want to run them by you to be sure I heard the right ideas as the important ones. I think I heard you say that child care is a necessity for you and that it involves lots of worry when you're uncertain how things are going. Finally, you'd prefer to do the bulk of the care giving yourself. Is that right?

I5: Yes, that's all true. This is an area around which I'd like lots more control.